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Thursday August 6 1998

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The Guardian

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Clare Boylan on:

Sunshine: why we need it

G2 with European weather



Addictive personalities

Stars on the sauce

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OnLine

Fast bucks

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In the open: the plot to kill Gadafy

Richard Norton-Taylor

BRITAIN'S foreign intelligence service, MI6, attempted to kill Libya's leader, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, two years ago in a plot that led to the deaths of several bystanders, it was claimed yesterday.

The allegations were made by David Shayler, the former MI6 officer who is being held in a Paris jail pending extradition to Britain to face charges under the Official Secrets Act. They were reported

in yesterday's New York Times, available on the streets of Britain this morning, and on the newspaper's Internet site and international wire service, both widely available in Britain.

The New York Times reports that Mr Shayler claims: "MI6 tried to assassinate Colonel Gaddafi in February 1996 by planting a bomb under his motorcade."

But agents placed the bomb under the wrong car, killing several bystanders.

The agent in charge had ties to a rightwing fundamentalist group in Libya.

The agent was paid \$100,000.

Under British law it is illegal for MI6 to carry out acts abroad which would be outlawed in Britain, providing they are authorised by the Foreign Secretary. Malcolm Rifkind held the post at the time of the alleged plot.

There have been numerous attempts on Col Gaddafi's life. The last reported attempt to kill him was two months ago, when gunmen opened fire on his entourage near Benghazi.

In 1986, the Thatcher government approved an air attack by British-based United States bombers on barracks where he slept.

Mr Shayler first came to

public attention a year ago when he told the Mail on Sunday that MI6 held thousands of files on people, including Labour ministers it once considered potentially subversive, and he accused the agency of bungling operations. A government injunction prevented newspapers from publishing further claims by Mr Shayler, who had fled to France.

The Guardian yesterday sought clarification from the Government about whether it was free to repeat the allegations in the New York Times. The Treasury Solicitor said it "must be a matter for you".

In an attempt to seek further clarification, reference was made by the Guardian to the European Court of Human Rights judgment in the Spycatcher case, which ruled that to prevent publication of material which had appeared elsewhere was a breach of the right to freedom of expression.

The BBC has also questioned the injunction in the past 24 hours. It has been conducting an investigation into the allegations and has amassed further information about the alleged plot.

John Wadham, Mr Shayler's lawyer and director

of the civil rights group, Liberty, said yesterday he was trying to free him from jail in Paris, as he began to fight the Government's request to extradite Mr Shayler to Britain, where he faces charges under the Official Secrets Act.

Speaking from Paris, Mr Wadham said: "I hope to be able to get a bail hearing next week and I hope then he will be released". But it could be months before Mr Shayler finds out if he will be returned to face trial in Britain.

Meanwhile, Richard Tomlinson, a former MI6 officer, was served with an injunction in New Zealand yesterday

banning him from making "damaging disclosures" about the agency's activities. A Foreign Office spokesman said: "There is no question of taking this action to stifle criticism of the Secret Intelligence Service. The reason for the action is to protect the secrecy of the service's operations and maintain its effectiveness."

It was clear that Britain told the New Zealand authorities that Mr Tomlinson had information which could damage the country's interests. Doug Graham, the New Zealand attorney-general, described the injunction as

"highly significant" to his country's national security, and "of particular significance in terms of maintaining inter-governmental relations on security matters".

Mr Tomlinson was released from jail earlier this year after being convicted under the Official Secrets Act for sending a book synopsis to an Australian publisher. However, he said on New Zealand television yesterday that he only wanted to expose MI6 bad management.

New York Times report, page 3; Leader comment and letters, page 9

Anti-gay bishops crush liberals

Madeline Bunting
Religious Affairs Editor

ANGLICAN bishops averted a 'damaging split' yesterday by voting by a huge majority that homosexuality is incompatible with biblical teaching and that sex is only permitted within marriage.

The resolution represented a crushing defeat for liberal sections of the church against a powerful alliance of conservative evangelicals from America, Australia, Africa and Singapore, who threatened to walk out unless the Lambeth Conference upheld traditional Anglican teaching on sexual morality.

Making a decisive intervention in the tense two-and-a-half hour debate, to prevent the Communion from disintegrating, the Archbishop of Canterbury threw his office behind the conservative line.

"This has been a difficult and painful debate, whatever one's views, I became conscious during this debate that we could allow disagreement to become division," said Dr George Carey in an unscripted speech.

"I stand wholeheartedly with traditional Anglican orthodoxy. I see no room in the Scriptures and in the entire Christian tradition for sexual activity outside marriage."

The huge majority, 286 votes to 70 with 45 abstentions, represented a personal triumph for Dr Carey. Keeping the Lambeth Conference united has been a critical test of his leadership.

Many African bishops said

it was Dr Carey's own views on homosexuality and the relationships he has built up on his visits to Africa which prevented them from walking out of the three-week Conference, in Canterbury.

During the debate, the Rt Rev Alexander Malik, Bishop of Lahore, Pakistan, voiced the horror of many bishops at the idea of same-sex unions and the ordination of active homosexuals.

"It is not gay bashing to uphold the authority of Scripture. It is a matter of faith and dogma. What will we do at the next Lambeth when people ask for blessings for union with their pet animals — dogs and cats?"

The Most Rev Moses Tay, Archbishop of Singapore, one of the key conservatives behind yesterday's decision, warned the conference against "unhealthy literature which can be polluting" from provinces with a more sympathetic attitude to homosexuality.

The conference's headline resolution stated that it could not "advise the legitimacy or blessing of same-sex unions nor the ordination of those involved in same-gender unions". This is a significant setback to the campaign for gay rights within the Church of England.

English bishops currently teach that faithful homosexual relationships are acceptable for the laity but not for the clergy.

In practice, there are a significant number of practising homosexual priests, and several bishops have admitted that, when ordaining they do



Gay church activist Richard Kirker (left) at Canterbury yesterday, argues with Bishop Chukwuma of Nigeria, who tried to 'cure' him by laying on hands. PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON RHYTHAN

not inquire into priests' sexual habits.

The Lambeth Conference, which meets once every decade, is only advisory and has no power to bar gay priests. But any softening of the Church of England's stance is extremely unlikely for the foreseeable future, given the vehemence with which bishops, particularly the Africans, warned that toleration of homosexuality in one part of the Anglican church might seriously damage another.

In the United States, the Conference's decision will be greeted with dismay by many openly practising gay and lesbian bishops, although the evangelical wing of the Epis-

copal Church greeted the resolution with delight.

"The willingness of so many American church leaders to try to legitimise homosexual behaviour has foisted this difficult discussion on the world-wide church. It has sapped our energy from urgent tasks such as evangelism and justice for the poorest," said the Rt Rev James Stanton, Bishop of Dallas.

The only concession the liberals managed to get into the resolution was that the church should continue to listen to homosexuals.

The Rt Rev Catherine Ross, Bishop of New York, warned: "To condemn homosexuality is evangelistic suicide in my region," she said. "It will be a pyrrhic victory and you will have a divided church."

Outside the hall, there were bitter confrontations between advocates of gay rights and opponents. The Rt Rev Emmanuel Chukwuma, Bishop of Enugu, Nigeria, tried to "cure" Richard Kirker, spokesman of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, by laying on hands.

"Repent, repent of your sin. You have no inheritance in Kingdom of God. Your church is dying in Europe because you condone immorality. You have made yourselves homosexuals because of your carnality," he told him.



Move over John Grisham, Ulysses is new best seller



Sales of Ulysses have risen by 50 per cent in some shops

ONE of the most challenging books in the English language, James Joyce's Ulysses, has shot up the bestsellers list, ahead of popular novelists such as John Grisham and Tom Clancy, thanks to its number one ranking in a list of the best 100 novels published last month.

Ulysses is now the number two bestseller on the online bookseller, Amazon.com — (behind Rebecca Wells' Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood) — and

has enjoyed a 50 per cent increase in sales in some bookshops.

"We were looking for a copy of Ulysses this morning and found that we had sold out," said Mary Ann Brownlow, a spokeswoman for Borders Books, a US national book chain.

"The list hasn't quite had the impact of the Oprah book club [recommendations by TV chat show host Oprah Winfrey] but I think it has got people talking about certain books and now they are going out to buy them," she said.

The list, released two weeks ago by the Modern

Library, a publishing subsidiary of Random House, has been the subject of great controversy since it listed, in order of preference, Ulysses, The Great Gatsby, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Lolita and Brave New World as the five top English language novels of the 20th century.

Initially criticised for its white, male bias, the method by which the rankings were compiled has also come under fire. The panel of 10 eminent board members of the Modern Library who actually picked the books have expressed sur-

prise at how some of them made it to the top of the list.

Asked how Brave New World made it to the top five, one said "God knows," and two others said "I have no idea."

Panelists say they were not asked to list books in order of preference but simply to tick novels from a list of 440 titles provided by Random House without ranking them. There was no consensus on whether they were listing the best written books, the most important or the most influential. One judge told the Washington Post he even voted for books he had not actually read.

The board chairman of the Modern Library, Christopher Cerf, said: "I think the process is to some degree a scam, but it's a good scam. I mean that in the best sense of the word."

"The statistics weren't valid, but if you had a list that was really diverse and incredibly thought out, it would cause less controversy and then people wouldn't buy books."

Booksellers say the list has made little difference to sales of the more popular classics. But for the likes of Ulysses it has provided a new lease of commercial life.

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Britain
Parts of the British coast at risk of flooding should be abandoned to the sea, a committee of MPs advocated.

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YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT. You can phone for further information or a written quotation at any time. You must be aged 18 or over. Life insurance is required. For your security all calls are recorded and randomly monitored. The Virgin One account is not currently available in Northern Ireland. Virgin Direct Personal Finance Ltd, Discovery House, Whitting Rd, Norwich, NR4 6EL.

The Shayler affair

Did MI6 really try to assassinate Colonel Gadafy?

Claims by David Shayler, an ex-MI5 agent, surfaced in the New York Times yesterday. That account is reproduced below

The New York Times

By Sarah Lyall

DID the British government try to assassinate Colonel Muammar Gadafy, the Libyan leader, in February 1986 by planting a bomb under his motorcade? And did the plan go awry because agents from MI6, the foreign intelligence service, put the bomb under the wrong car, killing several Libyans bystanders?

Britons may never know the answers, or even the credibility of the assertions, but for the last few days the nation has been consumed by the questions. Or at least sort of consumed, because news organisations are not really allowed to ask them.

A sweeping injunction has barred newspapers and television news programmes from publishing the embarrassing allegations about the inner workings of Britain's security services, brought up by a disgruntled former officer. The media have been forced to discuss the allegations without actually saying what the allegations are.

"I've known these things for something like 16 months, and I am not allowed to publish any of it," said Jonathan Holborow, editor of the Mail on Sunday.

It was the Mail on Sunday that a year ago published an initial round of disclosures by the disgruntled agent, David Shayler, aged 32, who left his job at MI5 — the domestic security agency, where he worked on the Libyan desk — in early 1997.

At the time he said he was frustrated at the organisation's incompetence, mismanagement and lack of accountability. Among other things, he said MI5 had kept files on several members of the current government, including Peter Mandelson, the Trade and Industry Secretary, when they were active in student movements in the 1970s. He also spoke of low morale and drunkenness in the agency.

Shocked at the airing of intimate details about MI5, the Government quickly obtained a far-reaching civil injunction barring the British news media from airing any more of Shayler's allegations.

Sensing that he faced arrest under Britain's draconian Official Secrets Act, Shayler fled the country. But last week the long arm of the Government caught up with him. The former agent, who was threatening to publish details of the supposed Gadafy plot on the Internet, was arrested in a hotel room in Paris. He is

now in a Parisian prison, fighting Britain's efforts to extradite him.

"He's a whistleblower," said Shayler's lawyer, John Wadham, the director of Liberty, the civil liberties group.

"In comparison with the [United] States, we have no real system of political accountability or legal accountability," he said, since the spy services are not even accountable to Parliament. "Under the law here, if David disclosed the colour of the carpets in the office where he worked, that would be a criminal offence."

The case is threatening to turn into a repeat of the infamous Spycatcher case of 1988, in which Peter Wright, a retired intelligence officer, published a book disclosing embarrassing secrets. The government spent hundreds of thousands of pounds to ensure the book would never be published — nor its allegations printed — in Britain, but copies were smuggled in from the United States and sold to the curious and the daring by the side of the road.

Now, with the advent of the Internet, it is probably only a matter of time before Shayler's allegations are disseminated.

Even so, the Government

has taken the harshest possible stand against the news media. "The thinking behind the injunction is that because of the nature of his work, it's possible that national security can be damaged," said a spokeswoman for the Home Office, who spoke on condition that her name not be used.

Strangely enough, the Government told the press earlier this week it could report the allegation about the Gadafy assassination plot in the vaguest possible terms because, the Home Office spokeswoman said, "it is untrue".

But it forbade reporting of related details, such as the allegations that the agent in charge had ties to a shady rightwing fundamentalist group in Libya, and that he was paid \$100,000.

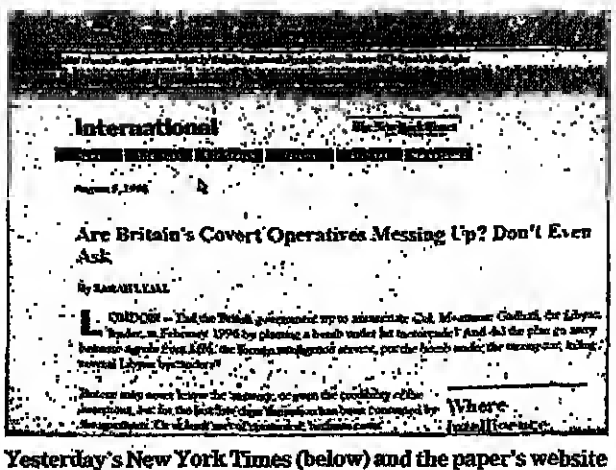
Reporters are hamstringing in two ways, editors said. Because of the Official Secrets Act, it is virtually impossible to get anyone to tell them anything about the inner workings of MI6 or MI5, so they cannot check the veracity of Shayler's allegations. And because of the injunction, they cannot even publish information about his credibility, or lack of it, in any detail.

"If we do, we can be prosecuted," said John Wadham, editor of the Sunday Times. "Or they can go for an injunction, which would force us to stop printing and scrap the newspapers we've printed already."

In addition, the injunction requires that anything the papers print on the subject that comes directly from Shayler must be vetted by the Government, which then decides what the papers can print.

"As a journalist in a free democracy," said Jonathan Holborow, of the Mail on Sunday, this censorship "makes me feel pretty sick".

"We haven't had this sort of thing since the war," he said. — *New York Times*



Yesterday's New York Times (below) and the paper's website

Are Britain's Covert Operatives Messing Up? Don't Even Ask

By SARAH LYALL

LONDON, Aug. 4 — Did the British Government try to assassinate Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, the Libyan leader, in February 1986 by planting a bomb under his motorcade? And did the plan go awry because agents from MI6, the foreign intelligence service, put the bomb under the wrong car, killing several Libyans bystanders?

Where intelligence agencies fall under a core of silence.

The case is threatening to turn into a repeat of the infamous "Spycatcher" case of 1988, in which Peter Wright, a retired intelligence officer, published a book disclosing embarrassing secrets. The Government spent hundreds of thousands of pounds to ensure the book would never be published — nor its allegations printed — in Britain, but copies were smuggled in from the United States and sold to the curious and the daring by the side of the road.

Echoes of Spycatcher, the gag that exploded in Thatcher's face

Richard Norton-Taylor

TWELVE years ago, the Guardian and the Observer were prevented by a court injunction from disclosing allegations made in Spycatcher, the memoirs of the former MI5 officer, Peter Wright.

The Thatcher government continued to try to gag the British press, even after an Australian court had dismissed its attempt to suppress the book, and after it was published in the US.

There was no attempt to extradite Wright from Australia. He was prosecuted in a civil action for allegedly breaching his duty of confidentiality. The Government is now trying to extradite David Shayler from France and prosecute him in a criminal trial for allegedly breaching the Official Secrets Act.

Nevertheless, there are striking similarities between the two cases. In 1987, after a two-year fight in the English courts, the newspapers went to Strasbourg for a ruling under Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights which covers freedom of expression. It is now enshrined in British law under the Human Rights Act.

First, the European Commission of Human Rights announced its ruling: "Freedom of expression constitutes one of the essential foundations of



The former MI5 officer Peter Wright. Attempts to stifle his disclosures bear similarities with the David Shayler case

a democratic society, in particular freedom of political and public debate. This is of special importance for the free press which has a legitimate interest in reporting on and drawing the public's attention to deficiencies in the

operation of government services, including possible illegal activities. It is incumbent on the press to impart information and ideas about such matters and the public has a right to receive them."

In a passage particularly

pertinent to today, it continued: "It was clear by the time the book [Spycatcher] was published in the USA that the confidentiality of information held by Mr Peter Wright had been destroyed. . . . The Commission fails to see a pressing social need to prevent the British public from reading about something the rest of the world was free to read by then."

Finally, in 1991 the European Court of Human Rights declared an equally ringing phrase: "Freedom of expression constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic society. . . . It is applicable not only to information or 'ideas' that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive or as a matter of indifference, but also to those that offend, shock or disturb."

"These principles," the court went on, "are of particular importance as far as the press is concerned. Whilst it must not overstep the bounds set, *inter alia*, in the interests of national security or for maintaining the authority of the judiciary," it is nevertheless incumbent on it to impart information and ideas on matters of public interest."

"Not only does the press have the task of imparting such information and ideas. The public also has a right to receive them. Were it otherwise, the press would be unable to play its vital role of 'public watchdog'."



The media has been forced to discuss the allegations concerning Colonel Muammar Gadafy without saying what they are

ADVERTISEMENT

ARAB BANK PLC GIVEN NEW RATING

Senior Debt : assigned AA-
Short-Term : assigned TBW-1
Issuer : assigned B

Thomson BankWatch is pleased to announce the assignment of new ratings for Arab Bank PLC. The rating exercise for Arab Bank was indeed unique as the legal structure of the bank is unlike anything previously seen, even when compared to developed markets. While typically it is unusual to split a rating as such, the very nature of Arab Bank necessitates such an action.

Arab Bank PLC can lay claim to one of the longest and decidedly the most distinguished histories of any bank in the Middle East region. The bank's origin pre-dates World War II and has continued on during periods of regional turmoil and strife that would have severely tested and destroyed the resolve of many institutions not just regionally but globally, if similar circumstances were applied. During all of these periods, the bank has not just weathered each crisis, but in every case benefited and emerged even stronger.

Arab Bank can be described in at least two ways. The first way, the bank is clearly a survivor. The second way is that the bank's own name can be a misnomer, especially from risk profile perspective. While the bank is headquartered in Amman Jordan, the overall

country risk profile resembles some of the best banks domiciled in both Western Europe and the United States. The bank brings with it, a long history and a philosophy that its customers are indeed "first and most important". It is this philosophy that has created the bank that exists today and that can lay claim to be a peer bank when compared to some of the best banks in the world. This philosophy has also moved Arab Bank into being one of the only true "flight to quality" banks in the Middle East.

Arab Bank is diversified over a broad geography where operations comprising more than 80% of consolidated activities are conducted outside of Jordan. The unique capital structure enables the bank ratings to be considered independent of any sovereign rating for the country in which the Arab Bank is headquartered. Further there are sufficient legal precedents and opinions which indicate that any potential extraterritorial seizure of Arab Bank external assets by local regulatory authorities is highly unlikely and not valid under most if not all legal jurisdictions. Accordingly, as the vast majority of Tier 1 capital, and assets are outside of Jordan thereby

greatly diminishing the element of transfer risk and as a hard currency (US Dollar) is the functional currency for Arab Bank, Thomson BankWatch employs the global ratings scale for the Arab Bank rating. Asset quality is extremely solid given the history of expertise cultivated and applied to lending. Additionally, a conservative level of loan loss reserves is maintained to fully cover non-performing loans. The tenor of the loan portfolio is quite short with 80% scheduled to mature within one year as of YR97. Total loans for Arab Bank typically represent less than 50% of assets. The stability of earnings is enhanced by the conservative asset/liability management as well as lending strategy and geographic diversification. Also supporting the sound financial position is a healthy capital base with the BIS Tier 1 ratio exceeding 12% and shareholders' equity to assets of nearly 9%. Arab Bank is well established and dynamic, as demonstrated in its sound performance and impressive perseverance. Management has planned for any potential disruption in the Arab Region by building capital

in its branches in some of the world's major financial centers. Even in the unlikely event of a regional difficulty affecting more than Jordan, Arab Bank has more than sufficient asset liquidity to repay all foreign currency obligations. As Arab Bank has several sizable subsidiaries, affiliates, and an extensive network of international branches, the bulk of consolidated equity is housed outside of Jordan. Management has coordinated the broad geography of banking operations through the hubs in Amman, London and Geneva. The underlying strategy has been a focus on serving Arab communities worldwide, particularly through trade finance both on and off of the balance sheet. Credit quality is solid, as are loan loss reserves and capital. Management prefers to maintain a high degree of liquidity mainly in conservative inter-bank placements and government securities. Consequently, returns have been modestly lower than those of diversified international banks. Management's successful and well developed strategy provides the foundation for the continued sound expansion of operations.



"I didn't sleep last night. I was at home in bed and it was real dark outside and I could hear these noises out back. I was sure someone was coming for me and I thought maybe that's what the killer did with the others."

Jean, a prostitute, on the recent murders of three of her colleagues

G2 page 4

new lads' Labour attacked

MPs attack NHS records system

David Hencke
Westminster Correspondent

THE NHS Executive was condemned by MPs yesterday for buying a hospital computer system which will take 18 years to become fully operational and will cost the taxpayer "many times" the £30 million already spent developing it.

The Commons public accounts committee is scathing about the "serious failings" of the executive in buying the Read Codes patient records system pioneered by Loughborough GP James Read in 1990.

The committee said the innovative system was acquired for £1 million by the taxpayer from Dr Read without an independent study and for double the original price.

Dr Read was then put in charge of the project and given exclusive distribution rights to the NHS, creating a "wholly unacceptable" conflict of interest. The report reveals that Dr Read has personally made £227,843 out of the system since 1990.

Eight years after its acquisition, the Read Codes is being tested and used in just 12 NHS hospitals.

Full implementation is expected to take a further five

years and health professionals are divided about whether it will work.

PAC chairman David Davis said: "The Read Codes have so far cost £22 million, and full implementation will cost many times that amount."

"It is wholly unsatisfactory that the NHS Executive allowed management standards in this case to fall so far short of those expected in public life."

Health managers established the Centre for Coding and Classification to develop codes for the NHS. They then appointed Dr Read its first director, giving his company, Computer Aided Systems, exclusive distribution and support rights to the NHS.

The Comptroller and Auditor General had highlighted a number of concerns about the way the centre had been run, including use of inappropriate personnel management practices, failure to invite competitive tenders and the payment of £128,000 in lieu of notice to one individual without negotiation.

In addition, there were inadequate recruitment procedures and "shortcomings" in financial controls, including "double payments to Dr Read for use of a car".

The executive has ordered an independent evaluation of the Read Codes.

Egg yolks and orange peppers 'best foods for preserving sight'

Sarah Boseley
Health Correspondent

IT MAY not be carrots that make you see in the dark after all, according to research published yesterday. The foods that best preserve eyes from deteriorating with age are egg yolk, maize and orange peppers.

As they age, many people experience the cumulative effects of oxidative damage to the macula, that part of the retina that enables us to differentiate colours. Macular degeneration can lead to impaired eyesight and blindness.

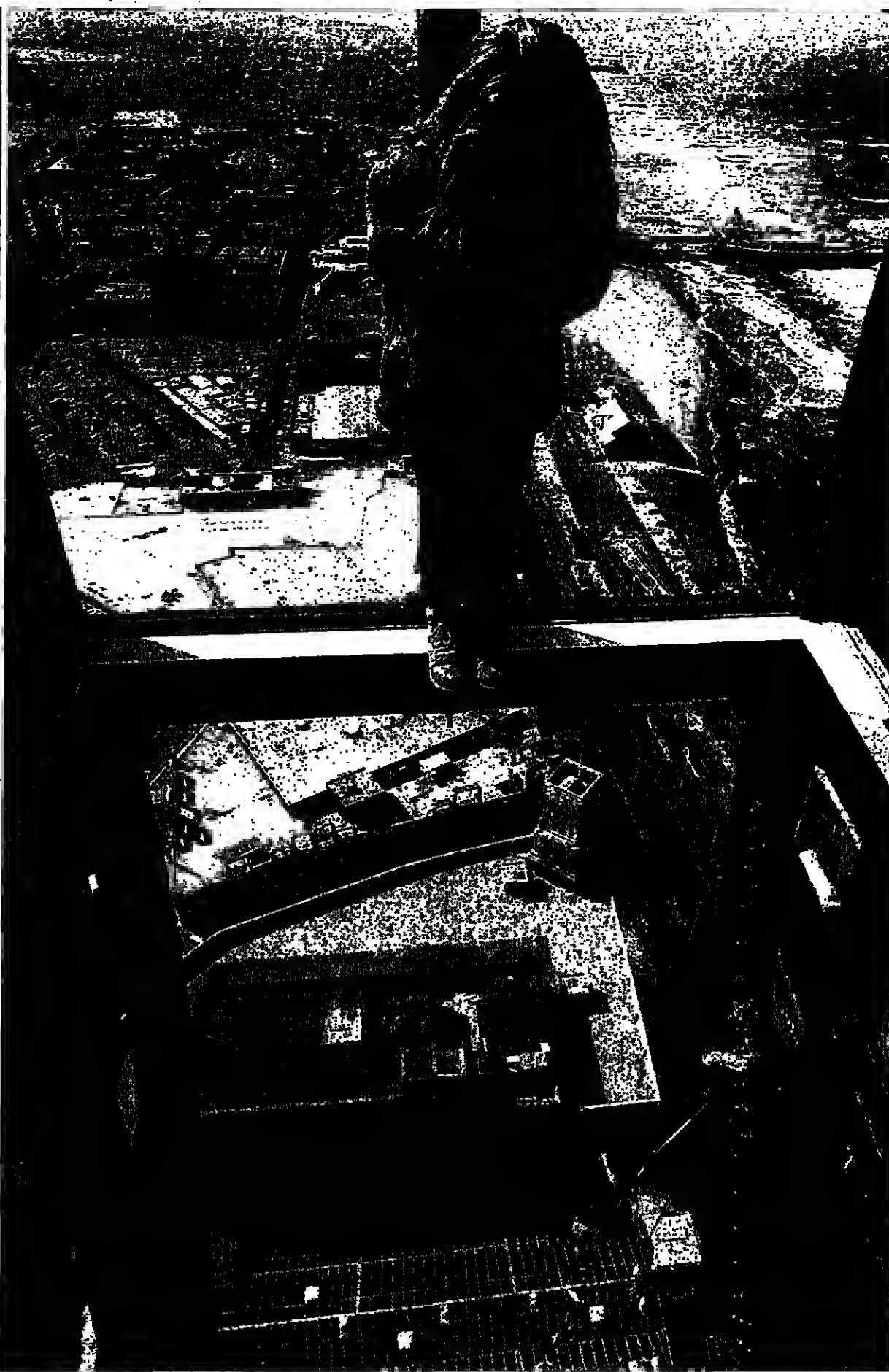
In today's British Journal of Ophthalmology, Frederik van Kuijk of the University of Texas in Galveston describes testing a variety of foods for their antioxidant content. Most helpful to the eyesight

were those containing two antioxidant carotenoid pigments, lutein and zeaxanthin, which make up a substantial part of the macula.

Many doctors advise patients to eat dark green leafy vegetables to safeguard their sight. Dr van Kuijk found that although these were helpful because of high lutein levels, they had a low zeaxanthin content. Egg yolk and corn contained far more zeaxanthin.

The paper disputed the risk to health from the high cholesterol content of eggs, arguing that their benefits to sight outweigh such fears. "The exclusion of eggs from the diet could be reconsidered," says Dr van Kuijk.

Other foods particularly good for the eyes, the paper suggests, are orange peppers, red grapes, pumpkins and courgettes.



Heady heights... Blackpool Tower yesterday opened its Walk of Faith, a glass floor 385ft above ground. The laminated glass by Pilkingtons is 5cm thick and, it is claimed, can bear the weight of five small elephants. PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN GILES

News in brief

Prince's scheme for a 'style wars' truce

THE PRINCE of Wales is setting up a architectural foundation and hopes to call a truce in the "style wars" of modern versus traditional.

The Foundation for Architecture and the Urban Environment will occupy a disused fur warehouse in Shoreditch, on the edge of the City of London. It will co-ordinate the work of organisations inspired by the prince but which operate independently. The new set-up is designed to breathe life into the prince's Institute of Architecture, which has had five directors in six years and went through an unsettled period when its glossy magazine, Aspects of Architecture, folded.

Siege pensioner's arsenal

A PENSIONER who barricaded himself inside his home during a five day siege had an arsenal of 26 shotguns and four hunting rifles, police disclosed yesterday.

Officers recovered the weapons — which were all legally held — during a search of the house after the siege ended peacefully on Tuesday. George Andrews, 73, was yesterday in police custody at Kidderminster awaiting questioning. Up to 40 officers were involved in the siege at the pensioner's home in Buttomock, near Bewdley, Worcestershire, which was sparked by a council tax dispute.

Driving examiner attacked

AN ENRAGED man rained blows on a driving examiner who told him he had failed his test for the third time, a court heard today.

Horace Campbell, 30, punched Peter Oatway repeatedly about the head and body. When Mr Oatway barricaded himself in an office, Campbell tried to kick the door in. Manchester crown court heard.

Campbell, of Cavanagh Close, Brunswick, Manchester, was jailed for nine months after pleading guilty to assault, affray and criminal damage.

Student strips naked in court

A FINE arts student accused of daubing a Rembrandt self portrait (right) with paint at the National Gallery in London, stripped naked in the dock at Bow Street magistrates court yesterday.

Vincent Michael Bethell, aged 26, a Coventry university student, took off his white coverall, stood up and shouted "society is mentally ill, destroy society, long live humanity".

He was taken out of court. He denied the charge and was remanded in custody in his absence to appear at Horseferry Road magistrates court on August 11.



Fewer living in care homes

FIVE years after it was begun, community care for elderly and disabled people has finally caused the expected fall in the numbers of beds in residential and nursing homes as more people are helped to carry on living on their own.

According to analysts Laing & Buisson, there is a total 562,000 beds in care homes — 1,000 fewer than in 1993, when community care started. Before then, the residential care sector had expanded relentlessly for 30 years.

Under community care, state funding for care services is cash-limited and controlled by local authorities. Previously, help with care home fees was open ended and administered by social security.

Laing & Buisson estimates there are 487,000 elderly and disabled people in care homes, compared to a peak of 512,000 in 1995. — David Brindle

Safety problem with pools

Gerrard Seenan

THE summer may finally have hit Britain, but those looking to cool off in swimming pools should beware of poor safety standards, according to a report published today.

Dangerous design features, inadequate lifeguard cover and unprofessional behaviour by lifeguards are among problems highlighted in a Which? magazine report on private and public swimming pools.

Two inspectors from the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management were sent by the Consumers' Association to investigate anonymously 25 pools in the North and South of England and in North Wales. The inspectors said they found a number of causes for concern on the day of inspection.

Many pools "failed" to meet the guidelines on swimming pool safety," said Helen Parker, editor of Which? "Lifeguard supervision and

lack of signs were particular problem areas.

"Alarming, two thirds of the pools inspected failed to provide adequate lifeguard cover. This was either because there was not enough of them, not all areas of the pool were supervised, or the lifeguards were not behaving professionally. Chilling was common."

The inspectors visited the pools during the Easter holidays. Almost all were found to have some problem but four were singled out for particular criticism: Bournemouth International Centre, Sandcastle centre in Blackpool, Nova Centre in Prestatyn and Rhyl Sun Centre.

Michael Jackson of the Royal Lifesaving society, which trains 30,000 lifeguards each year, said problems tended to be confined to smaller pools, hotels and clubs.

Last year, 14 people drowned in public and private pools, and in 1996/97 there were 98 serious accidents in local authority pools.

Home Office allows casinos out of the shadows to advertise

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

CASINOS are to be allowed to advertise for the first time under plans announced by the Home Office last night to relax controls of the gaming industry.

The decision finally takes the industry in Britain out of the secret, shadowy world of discreet clubs to which it was relegated in the late 1960s by tough legislation after a series of high profile money scandals in Mayfair.

Since the 1968 Gaming Act, the roulette and blackjack clubs have been banned from listing their addresses in the phone book. Now, in line with the Government's deregulation moves, they will be able to advertise in national and local publications, such as tourist guides, directories, newspapers and magazines.

However, the adverts will not be allowed to promote gambling. Instead the clubs will be restricted to giving their names, logos and addresses, including e-mail, telephone and fax numbers. They will also be able to advertise the number of gaming tables and machines they have on their premises.

Ministers have stopped short of abolishing all the restrictions concerning membership of the clubs. For example, new customers will have to hold a membership card for 24 hours before they can play. But, in future, would-be members will be able to apply by fax or by post rather than in person — a change designed to help tourists apply for membership before their holiday.

Members of one casino, however, will however be given immediate access to clubs within the same group.



Easy riders... for most bikers the Bulldog Bash is not for sorting enemies, but for the art of motorcycle maintenance

Bikers revving up gang war, say police

Stuart Miller

THOUSANDS of motorcycle enthusiasts will gather today at an airfield in Warwickshire amid fears that a feud between two rival gangs could escalate.

Police have warned that the annual Bulldog Bash event at Long Marston, near Stratford-upon-Avon, could see "warfare" between the Hell's Angels (its organisers) and the rival Outcasts gang.

The Outcasts, working with their Midlands-based allies the Outlaws, are suspected of planning to use explosives at the event.

Against the authorities' advice, the All England Chapter of the Hell's Angels has refused to cancel the four-day bash, which, each year, nets the Hell's Angels up to £1 million, and which will probably attract about 40,000 people.

"We are taking the information of a threat very seriously," said a Warwickshire police spokesman. "The police presence is therefore likely to be greater than in previous years." Detectives think the violence could reach the levels seen in Scandinavia, where a two year war between the Hell's Angels and the rival Bandits left seven dead and saw a further 39 attempted killings.

Last month, the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) warned 37 police forces in England and Wales

The gangs

HELL'S ANGELS
Colours: Winged death's head wearing a pilot's helmet.
History: Founded in California in 1948. First British chapter formed in 1969, 14th in April. Moties: Three can keep a secret if two are dead.

OUTCASTS
Colours: Death's head wearing bandana and feathered top hat.
History: British gang founded in early 1980s. Nine chapters mainly around London and East Anglia. Moties: Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.

OUTLAWS
Colours: Seven feathers representing the founding gangs.
History: Founded in 1989 after feud between two Midlands gangs. Strength remains in Midlands, with 150 members.

of the possibility of "armed conflict and the use of automatic weapons and explosives" by biker gangs. According to NCIS, gang members are heavily involved in organised criminal activity, including drugs distribution and gun running.

The gangs vigorously deny they are involved in organised crime, and insist they cannot be held responsible for the actions of individuals.

The rivalry between the two gangs has brewed for

more than a decade. Tension has grown in the past two years with the rapid expansion of the Outcasts, now numbering about 200, mostly in London and East Anglia. With 150 members of the Outlaws, in the Midlands, the gang threatens the 30-year supremacy of the Hell's Angels, which has about 230 members in 14 chapters.

Last June, the Outcasts tried to absorb a small Hertfordshire club, the Lost Tribe. To head off the growing threat the Hell's Angels ordered members of the Lost Tribe to become "prospects" or probationary members of the gang. A "turf war" developed between the gangs.

On January 31, two Outcasts, Keith Armstrong and Malcolm St Clair, were fatally stabbed when a 1980s rock and roll party ended in a street battle outside the Battersea arts centre in south London. Two men are awaiting trial. A police search of the area recovered knives, hammers, axes and a cash.

Property owned by the Hell's Angels was then targeted. According to police, in March a fertilizer and petrol bomb was found at the clubhouse of the Angela's Lea Valley chapter, in Luton, Bedfordshire. A Kent motorcycle shop owned by members of the Hell's Angels, was the target of an attempted arson attack. Then two Outcasts were shot close to the clubhouse of the Outcast Family

The feud

June 1997: Outcasts attempt to take over Hertfordshire biker club, the Lost Tribe. Hell's Angels order Lost Tribe members to become "prospects".

November: Three Outcasts members arrested in possession of loaded shotguns.

January 1998: Two Outcasts members stabbed to death outside Rockers Reunion event.

March: Hell's Angel clubhouse targeted with crude fertilizer-based bomb.

April: Search of Outcasts members' home found Uzi 9mm automatic pistol parts, an AK assault rifle and two sub-machine-guns.

July: Magna Carta rally cancelled amid fears of violence.

chapter in east London. Both victims survived but refused to co-operate with the police, in accordance with the gang's code of silence.

The Outcasts have a history of violence. In 1987, nine of its members were convicted of conspiracy to inflict grievous bodily harm on a rival gang. In the feud, one man was shot dead, another scalped with a ceremonial sword, several suffered fractured skulls from axe and hammer blows and others were stabbed.

Time to admit defeat on sea walls, say MPs

Paul Brown
Environment Correspondent

PARTS of the British coast at risk of flooding should be abandoned to the sea, a committee of MPs suggested yesterday.

Continuing to build ever higher defences to keep out the rising sea is no longer an option, and retreat to new positions inland should begin immediately, the Commons agriculture committee said yesterday.

People forced to abandon homes are fields for the general good of the community should be compensated by central government, the MPs say.

Those selling any of the 1.3 million properties classified as at risk from flooding should be forced by law to disclose the danger to potential purchasers.

The recommendations delighted environmental groups but angered farmers and landowners.

In a startling introduction to the report, the MPs look forward to a time 200 years hence when the Thames through London is half a mile wide, with large areas of Docklands and even the Palace of Westminster lost to ever higher tides.

Cardiff, Swansea, Bristol, Grimsby, Hull and Manchester face the same fate.

However, while the MPs say this is what will probably happen eventually, the beginning of the process is already observable along the East Coast. If there were no flood defences the annual cost of erosion and damage from flooding would be £2.1 billion.

But the committee says keeping up coastal defences and making them ever stronger is not an option, both because it is too expensive and because it does not work.

Eventually the forces of nature are too strong and defences are destroyed by the sea.

"It is time to declare an end to the centuries old war with the sea and seek a peaceful accommodation with our former enemy," says the report.

"It is better to plan a policy of managed realignment [of the coast] than to suffer the consequences of a deluded belief that we can maintain indefinitely an unbreachable Maginot line of towering sea walls and flood defences."

So-called soft defences where existing structures are removed and the sea allowed to reclaim dry land to a new point further inland are already being experimented with.

But, say the MPs, they should be adopted on a wide scale by the Government, and a proper system of compensation offered for lost assets.

The committee said flooding on rivers and along the coast is made worse by people building on flood plains. Other areas not to build in, ignored by local authorities.

MPs say new powers should be given to the Environment Agency to prevent this happening.

If permission is given, developers should be forced to set aside sufficient money to pay for extra flood defence works both upstream and downstream of the new building to safeguard properties put at greater risk as a result.

Information on the risk of flooding is not sufficient. Title deeds of properties at risk of inundation should be amended to show this clearly, and potential purchasers should be told the risk. Insurance companies would be obliged to inform purchasers of the difficulties they faced.

Commenting on the report, Tony Bailey, policy director for the Country Landowners Association, said there were miles of farmland in East Anglia immediately behind sea walls. "The abandonment of these defences would inevitably ruin farms and devastate the economies of those areas."

Nicola Melville, of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said: "This is a real opportunity to restore floodplain wet grasslands desperately needed by declining breeding water birds. It is a sensible way forward and much cheaper to implement than existing policy."

Congo rebellion

Senior ally joins rebel cause

FIGHTING in the Congo was emerging last night as a well-planned attempt to overthrow President Laurent Kabila, with the rebels producing a leader and the country's foreign minister defecting to their side, writes Alex Duval Smith in Johannesburg.

Speaking in the eastern town of Goma, Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma, leader of the Future Party, banned since May by Mr Kabila, said his forces were fighting for "all Congolese" and denied government claims that the rebellion was a Rwandan-Tutsi attempt to colonise former Zaire.

As the government confirmed that the eastern town of Bukavu had fallen to a Tutsi-led dissident faction of the new Congolese army, Mr Kabila's foreign minister, Ruzma Karaha, a Tutsi, announced that he had joined the rebels.

"This is a country-wide revolution to topple Kabila. It is spreading like fire," Mr Karaha said from Goma.

It emerged last night that Mr Kabila will join other leaders from the region in Zimbabwe tomorrow for talks on the crisis.

"It is a meeting to seriously analyse the Congo crisis and what the region can do to help," said a Zambian official. Heads of state from Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Namibia will attend.

The extent of the rebels' advance westward was unclear last night. The government denied reports that fresh fighting had broken out in the country's third largest city, Kisangani, where the airport is believed to be held by rebels.

Nor was it clear who controlled Uvira in South Kivu or Goma, to the north, but the International Red Cross said that it was pulling out of those areas because it had become "impossible to move around".



Congo president Laurent Kabila waves to crowds at celebrations to mark his first anniversary in office in May this year. A coalition of discontented factions now threatens to end his grip on power. PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID GUTTENFELDER

Lewinsky set to clear Clinton of urging perjury

Gary Youngs in Washington

THE crisis engulfing Bill Clinton will enter into its final stages today as Monica Lewinsky, the former White House intern with whom he is alleged to have had a sexual relationship, testifies before the grand jury.

Ms Lewinsky, aged 25, was granted immunity from prosecution last week in return for her full testimony and is expected to confirm that she did have a relationship with the president and that he encouraged her to keep quiet about it. But she is expected to deny that Mr Clinton urged her to lie under oath.

Last year she denied on oath having a relationship with the president, when she was subpoenaed in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case, which collapsed in April.

She is also expected to shed light on the semi-private cocktail dress she gave to her mother for safe-keeping. The FBI has completed a DNA test on the dress but has refused to release the results.

The independent prosecu-

tor, Kenneth Starr, is believed to be less interested in whether Ms Lewinsky had sex with the president than in whether he is guilty of obstruction of justice in trying to keep it quiet.

Proof of obstruction would help Mr Starr establish a pattern of behaviour stretching back to the Whitewater affair, the failed land deal in Arkansas which is supposed to be the focus of his investigations.

Sources say Mr Starr will be keen to discover precisely how the president might have urged Ms Lewinsky to cover up the affair. A key element in this line of questioning will be the content of her conversations with his private secretary, Betty Currie.

Mr Starr will want to know whether Mr Clinton asked Ms Lewinsky to say she was visiting the White House to see Mr Currie, and whether he asked her to return to his secretary the presents he gave her.

Mr Clinton will put his side of the story on August 17 when he testifies to the grand jury through a video link with his lawyers present. He has made it known through his spokesmen that he in-

tends to stick to his assertion that there was no sexual relationship. Whether he maintains that strategy partly depends on Ms Lewinsky's testimony and the results of the tests on her dress.

Mr Clinton attended to business as usual yesterday, addressing a House Democratic caucus on Capitol Hill, while White House lawyers remained embroiled in a legal tussle with Mr Starr over their right not to testify.

On Tuesday the chief justice, William Rehnquist, insisted that White House lawyers were not protected by client-attorney privilege and would have to testify fully.

One of them, Larry Brewer, went to the grand jury to testify but refused to answer certain questions, forcing a showdown that could lead to further judicial rulings and appeals.

Polls suggest that the US public has reached saturation point on the scandal. Less than 30 per cent are following the investigation closely, according to a poll by the Pew Research Centre. Sixty per cent would forgive Mr Clinton if he admitted an affair and said he lied to protect his family.

LAPD tags its own label

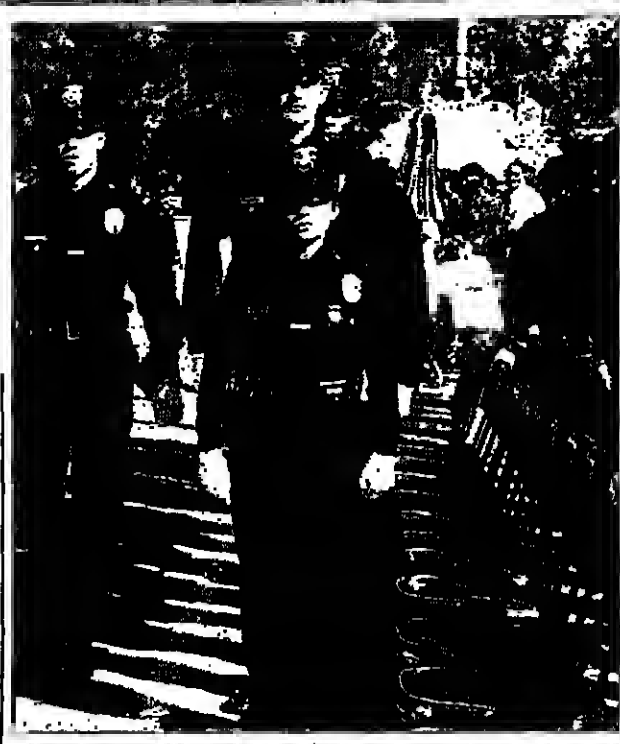
Christopher Reed in Los Angeles

KARL MARX'S theories may not be much appreciated in police forces, but his observation that under capitalism everything eventually becomes a commodity may strike a few chords in the Los Angeles police department: it is registering its initials LAPD as a trademark.

The city's police commission acted because it was concerned about the proliferation of cheap imitations of the force's badge and other symbols, which "create confusion and threaten to dilute the authority of LAPD officers".

Trinkets featuring the unauthorised LAPD include key chains, money clips, coffee mugs, T-shirts, a web site — "lapd.com" — and computer mouse pads depicting last year's televised riot between the men in blue and two bank robbers in the North Hollywood.

The LAPD's proximity to Times Square has made it the most famous — to some infamous — police force in the world. But its motto, "To protect and serve", now takes on a different connotation: protecting its



Officers on parade in Los Angeles, whose force wants to control the use of its famous initials. PHOTOGRAPH BY RENA PERAL

commercial rights and serving only the finest licensed merchandise.

Hollywood claimed the LAPD as more than just its local police force in the early 1950s. In the television series and film *Dragnet*, Sgt Joe Friday (Jack Webb) and colleagues ignored, as one critic put it, "77 varieties of civil liberties" in their pursuit of malefactors.

Friday's gravel-voiced plea for "Just the facts, ma'am" became an internationally recognised catchphrase. Among the unofficial protocols bearing the LAPD initials was the T-shirt that

appeared after video footage was shown around the world of officers savagely beating a black man, Rodney King. It morbidly announced: "LAPD — We Treat You Like a King."

Another wry slogan followed the 1969 shoot-out with the Black Panthers in the LAPD's Newton division. The division's nickname, "Shootin' Newton", is one it proudly bears to this day.

The LAPD is guilty of its own tacky promotions. The coroner's office gift shop sells beach towels with the chevron outline of a body and personalised toe-tags.

US schoolboy barred from girls' hockey team sues

Mark Tran in New York

ASCHOOLBOY in Maine in the United States is using sex discrimination laws to try to get on to his school's all-girl hockey team. He has the backing of the Maine Human Rights Commission.

Jeremy Ellis, aged 17, played hockey in Britain and wanted to pursue the sport in Portland, Maine. But the athletics director barred him, citing state rules to promote girls' sports.

With his mother's support, Jeremy filed a sex discrimination complaint with the Maine Human Rights Commission. Two years later, he is still waiting for the result.

The commission first ruled that he should be allowed to join the team. The Maine Principals' Association sued in the state court in Portland to block that action. The Ellis countersued and are still waiting for a trial date.

John Canas, the staff attorney for the human rights commission, says it is time for another look at sex discrimination laws. "They were introduced a decade ago and some progress has been made. Girls' participation in sports is now equal to boys."

Yet male athletes still outnumber female three to two, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Christine Grant, head of the women's athletic department at the University of Iowa, said: "The scale is still so much tipped in favour of men that it is well nigh impossible for them to win any legal challenge."

News in brief

Deal reached over East Timor talks

PORTUGAL and Indonesia agreed yesterday to discuss granting autonomy to the troubled province of East Timor and involve East Timor activists in the talks to a greater extent, the two countries' foreign ministers said.

The agreements, announced after two days of talks brokered by the UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, were concessions. Portugal, the province's colonial ruler until 1976, had previously backed nothing short of self-determination for East Timor; Indonesia had insisted that it should remain the only conduit to the East Timorese. Mr Annan said he would seek input from East Timorese leaders, including the Nobel peace laureate José Ramos Horta. — AP, New York

Kashmir death toll rises

EXCHANGES of artillery fire continued along the disputed Kashmir border yesterday as the death toll from seven days of clashes between Indian and Pakistani troops topped 100. Both sides reported more deaths. Artillery attacks were reported from several sectors of the Himalayan region, but their intensity had lessened, Indian defence officials said. — Reuters, Srinagar

Affront to Filipina maids

THE Philippines has protested to Athens after a Greek dictionary defined "Filipina" as "housemaid". The Philippine ambassador, Norberto Basilio, said the description was "an affront to the dignity" of Philippine women. The Philippines has more than 4 million nationals working overseas, whom Manila has called "heroes" for helping to prop up the economy. — Reuters, Manila

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Kabila looks weaker by the day as mistakes all come home to roost

Lack of nous and abuse of office have left the embattled leader with few friends in his time of need, writes Alex Duval Smith

FIFTEEN months after he ended Mobutu Sese Seko's 32-year reign of greed, the Congolese president, Laurent Kabila, is emerging as a failed puppet emperor, at sea in central African power-broking and reduced to nepotism and corruption.

He looks weaker by the day as an uncohesive but powerful alliance — disenchanted Congolese Tutsis, Rwandans, and possibly also Ugandans and Mobutists — increases its stranglehold on former Zaire.

Dissidents, many of whom he has exiled, claim that the crisis is of his own making. "As he has descended into corruption and nepotism, he has left himself with only the tribal card to play," said Guillaume Ngefa, the Swiss-based president of the Congolese human rights group Asadho: Association Africaine pour les Droits de l'Homme.

Brought to power in May last year by a revolt of Banyamulenge Tutsis from the east of the country supported by Rwanda, Uganda and Angola, Mr Kabila has disappointed his erstwhile allies.

He has not granted the special status demanded by the Banyamulenge, who are Tutsis of Rwandan origin,

and who were repressed for years by the Mobutu regime. Rwandan troops have come to their aid.

Uganda, which has to contend with a rebellion of its own by guerrillas based in Congo's North Kivu region, is disappointed that Mr Kabila has not brought the region under control. But Kampala has not sent any troops yet.

Neither has the Angolan president, Eduardo dos Santos, who is also preoccupied with fighting at home. President Dos Santos has good reason to consider Mr Kabila a traitor. It was his army which secured Mr Kabila's entry into the Congolese capital, Kinshasa, last year. Since April, just as it did in the Mobutu years, the Angolan rebel movement Unita has been receiving supplies through Kinshasa.

Not only has Mr Kabila shown himself unworthy of regional support, he has also alienated many in Congo. According to dissidents, the war chest he raised from Zairean companies and foreign investors, including Lebanese, Colombian, Israeli and United States and Canadian mining companies, was plundered by his regime.

The agency of ill-gotten gains — set up ostensibly to investigate corruption by Mobutu's regime — collapsed amid allegations that its staff were extorting those it investigated in return for immunity from prosecution.

Mr Kabila is also accused by émigrés of using regional summit meetings to export large sums of money by air. Last year he hired a Geneva-based advertising agency, Tri-media, to handle his international public relations, bypassing the Congo's own embassy.

Mr Kabila became convinced, with good reason, that Tutsis backed by Rwanda were plotting a coup, and he returned early from a state visit to Cuba last week. He sacked a number of Tutsis in his government and ordered all foreign troops to leave the country.

This followed the sacking of other Tutsis, who have been replaced by members of Mr Kabila's Katanga clan. His interior minister, Gaetan Kakudji, and his justice minister, Mwenze Kongo, are both his cousins. His son, Joseph, is deputy chief of army staff, and the justice minister, Mwenze Kongo, is his nephew.

The head of the national police force, the chief of the armed forces, the governor of the central bank, his ambassador-at-large and all new members of the presidential guard are from the southern Katanga region, which was formerly known as Shaba.

Mr Ngefa said: "He claims

to be rooting out 'Mobutists' but in fact, he has started targeting anyone who is not from Katanga."

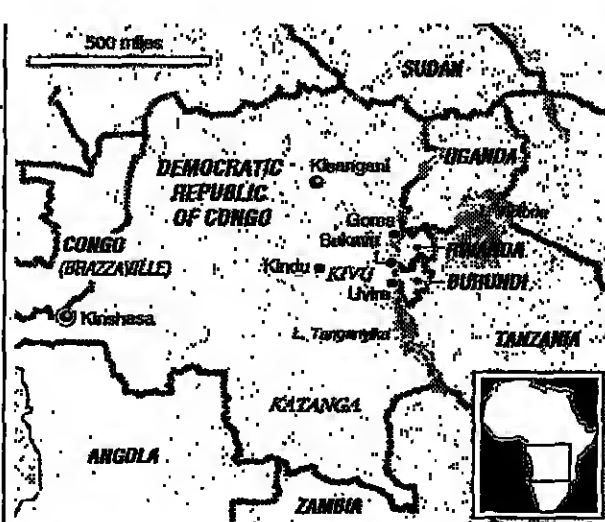
Those who have been jailed or forced to flee the country include almost all human rights activists, many opposition figures and a number of journalists.

In the last few days high-ranking officials have left, too. The presidential affairs minister, Desgratias Ngeza, has sought asylum in South Africa and Mr Kabila's chief aide during the battles against Mobutu, Moïse Nyanzobu, has fled.

Scattered about Africa and Europe are highly influential and very rich Mobutists who are believed by dissidents to be either funding the rebellion or prepared to do so, in an attempt to consolidate their continuing interests in the former Zaire. They were briefly the targets of the discredited agency for ill-gotten gains.

But Mr Ngefa argues that despite Mr Kabila's patent mismanagement of Congo, his human rights organisation and others who oppose the guerrilla-president have no option but to call for talks.

He said: "If we are to avoid another civil war and months of massacres, we have to back a national conference of all the parties. President Kabila can no longer run the country but we have to allow him to remain a temporary linchpin around which talks can proceed."



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Hun Sen victory fails to silence critics

Nick Cunningham-Bruce in Phnom Penh

OPPPOSITION parties attacked the announcement of a preliminary result in Cambodia's general election yesterday, giving victory to the ruling party of the second prime minister, Hun Sen, on the grounds that complaints of irregularities had not been dealt with.

After a series of delays and mounting controversy, the National Election Committee said Mr Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) had won 41 per cent of the vote

against 32 per cent for Funcinpec, the party led by the deposed former first prime minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh and 14 per cent for populist former finance minister Sam Rainsy's party.

If the result is upheld, the CPP will take 64 seats in the 123-seat national assembly. Funcinpec 43 and the Sam Rainsy Party 15.

The announcement was delayed by opposition allegations of fraud and demands for recounts. With these still unresolved, opposition parties queried how the NEC could announce any results.

"A lot of parties have com-

plained about irregularities and we want justice," a Funcinpec official said, while Mr Rainsy's party was "very suspicious".

Foreign observers pronounced the election broadly free and fair but failed to convince Cambodians. Many question how a leader as unpopular as Mr Hun Sen has been since his bloody coup 13 months ago could credibly claim to have won more of the popular vote.

Yesterday's result came as rifts between NEC directors over recounting votes helped to reinforce opposition suspicion of the integrity of the

election machinery set up and dominated by the CPP.

A change to the formula for distributing assembly seats has also been criticised. Without it, opposition parties would jointly hold a majority, but with it the CPP has the majority.

Even then it will be shy of the two-thirds majority needed to rule on its own. Mr Hun Sen said a coalition with Funcinpec, whom he drove out in the coup, was now "inevitable" and he has also proposed bringing in Mr Rainsy.

However, he insisted that the CPP controls three of the five deputy premierships and

the ministries of defence, interior, justice, foreign affairs and finance.

In what may be simply a bargaining tactic, opposition parties have threatened to boycott, and therefore paralyse, the new assembly. Mr Hun Sen said that if they do, he will change the constitution to reduce the majority needed to pass legislation, and then go it alone.

"This is Hun Sen's moment of truth," said a well-placed Cambodian source. "The election and foreign support for it have given him another chance. If he fails he may not get another."

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Right, Jean Cardot with his sculpture of Churchill, a bronze cast of which will be unveiled in Paris by the Queen in November. Above, the De Gaulle statue unveiled in London in 1993. PHOTOGRAPHS: MICHEL GRIESMARTIN/KEENE

Paris finally honours the 'old bandit'

Jon Henley in Paris

FIFTY-FOUR years to the day after Winston Churchill stamped down the Champs-Élysées to a rapturous reception from the newly liberated people of Paris, the French capital will unveil a statue in his honour.

The British embassy announced yesterday that the Queen will be in Paris on November 11 for the Armistice Day anniversary celebrations and will unveil the memorial — a 10ft bronze by the French sculptor Jean Cardot.

It marks the end of a five-year campaign by an Anglo-French businessman, Brian Reeve. He was determined to see a memorial to Britain's irascible wartime leader erected in Paris, to match one in London of his equally fiery French counterpart, Charles de Gaulle.

"It was an idea I've had for a very, very long time," Mr Reeve said yesterday. "I was born in London in 1936, lived through the Blitz and have memories of Churchill on the

streets of London. But when I moved to Paris in 1961, there was nothing to commemorate him but a small avenue."

Both capitals have been slow to honour each other's wartime heroes — perhaps reflecting the less than smooth relations between the two men. Stubbish and arrogant, Churchill and De Gaulle rarely saw eye-to-eye, the British prime minister once referring to the future French president as "the heaviest cross I ever had to bear."

For his part, De Gaulle, on seeing the Parisian crowds cheering Churchill on the Champs-Élysées in 1944, was heard to mutter: "Fools and cretins! Look at this rabble cheering the old bandit!"

Mr Reeve formed his Association for a Statue of Winston Churchill in Paris shortly after the Queen Mother unveiled a monument to De Gaulle outside the wartime headquarters of his Free French movement in Carlton Gardens in 1993. Fundraising for the De Gaulle statue was led by Churchill's daughter, Lady Soames. President Jacques Chirac



backed Mr Reeve's idea, forming a committee of honour headed by Pierre Messmer, a former prime minister. But it was not until a national appeal was launched in December with the help of the mayor of Paris, Jean Tiberi, that donations started to flow.

"It has been a little slow," Mr Reeve admitted. "But we're doing great now — we still need another £25,000, but out of a total of £200,000 I don't think that's bad."

Some 1,650 French people have contributed, Mr Reeve said, with donations ranging from £2 to £20,000.

"People have written to encourage us, recounting their wartime memories and expressing tremendous gratitude for what Churchill meant to France."

The statue portrays Churchill in characteristically robust pose — it was drawn from photographs and film footage of him in the Champs-Élysées

in Royal Air Force uniform, cane in hand, on Armistice Day 1944. Now in its final wax version, it will be cast in early next month and erected on November 8, on the corner of Cours de la Reine and Avenue Winston Churchill in the city's 8th arrondissement.

"It's a wonderful, dynamic image," Mr Reeve said. "It's like he's walking down the avenue the way the Germans did five years previously, but now he's thinking, 'It's ours.'"

Saddam's game of cat and mouse fails to throw UN off scent

Detective work has built up a picture of Iraq's remaining weapons, writes Julian Borger

DURING the seven years that the United Nations Special Commission (Unsc) inspectors have sniffed and sifted their way across Iraq, they have grown weary of Baghdad's attempted deceit.

Crucial documents have apparently disappeared in mysterious fires, or fallen off lorries. Last December inspectors were halted for 20 minutes and forced to look on from afar as computer hard-disk drives thought to contain information on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction were replaced.

Terence Taylor, a former inspector and now a strategic analyst, said: "I think its extraordinary that Unsc has found as much as it has, given the routine deception... The Iraqis will never admit to anything. You have to find it yourself."

Much of the available information has been wheedled out by detective work, such as analysing records of Iraq's imports of chemical and biological precursors in the 1980s. But arguably the most important breakthrough came in August 1995 with the defection to Jordan of Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel, defects with details of biological weapons programme.

June 96: Unsc blows up main biological weapons plant at Al Hakam.

June 96: Iraq admits manufacturing 3.9 tons of VX nerve agent "for research" but claims to be unable to "weaponise" it.

Feb 96: UN experts say Iraq probably capable of manufacturing up to 200 tons of VX.

April 96: UN experts conclude that Iraq concealed information on its chemical and biological weapons programmes. UN Security Council decides to keep economic sanctions in place.

June 96: US tests find traces of VX gas on Scud missile fragments — results disputed by Iraq. More fragments sent to France and Switzerland for analysis.

July 96: Talks break down in Baghdad on Unsc's proposals for an accelerated schedule of inspections before the next six-monthly review of sanctions.

claimed not to have found a way of "weaponising" its unstable ingredients.

The present crisis began soon after United States navy tests found traces of VX on fragments of Scud missiles which had earlier been destroyed and buried by the Iraqi army. Baghdad disputed the tests and called for a second examination in France and Switzerland — which it considers neutral.

The results are not due until late this month. If they confirm the US findings, Iraq's credibility will plummet before the international sanctions come up for their six-monthly review in October.

At the latest meeting in Baghdad with the Unsc chairman, Richard Butler, Iraq was also due to have handed over a document listing chemical warfare munitions held by its air force. Unsc inspectors found the

document on July 18 but were prevented from taking it.

A second Iraqi tactic also baffled earlier this year. The government had called for independent experts to assess Iraq's progress. In February the expert panel on chemical warfare reported that Iraq had the means to manufacture up to 200 tons of VX nerve agent. Unsc has no proof of the government's claim to have destroyed 500 tonnes of VX chemical ingredients or precursors.

More than 13,000 tonnes of chemical precursors essential for other weapons manufacture are also unaccounted for, as are at least 45 special missile warheads containing sarin toxin and binary chemical weapons, which Baghdad claims to have destroyed.

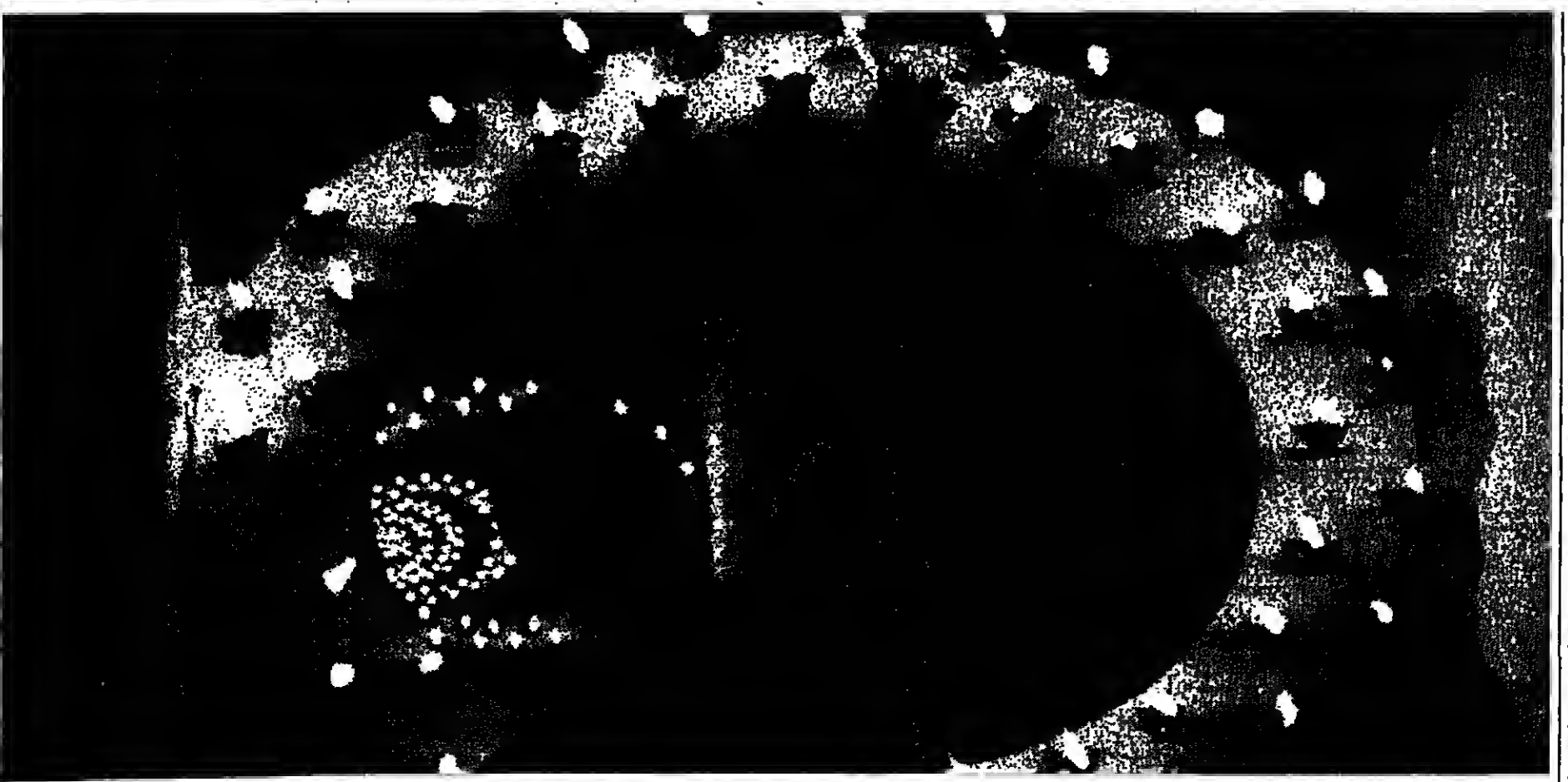
Unsc says there are similarly large gaps in Baghdad's account of its biological weapons programme. The government has admitted producing and weapons-testing anthrax, botulinum toxin, aflatoxin, and gangrene enough to wipe out cities.

But Unsc inspectors uncovered important records for nearly 40 tonnes of "growth media" (a jelly of nutrients used to cultivate bacteria), suggesting a biological weapons project on a far larger scale. The quantities were far greater than needed for ordinary hospital use, as Iraq claims. Baghdad has insisted that it has destroyed all remnants of its biological weapons programme.

Mr Taylor said: "It has been a web of lies and deceit for seven years, and when things get too troublesome it's throw the inspectors out. They see no chance of getting sanctions lifted, so they create a crisis."



Richard Butler: Head of UN team used to deception



Oil lamps are lit in Somma Vesuviana at the foot of Italy's Vesuvius volcano as part of the local festival. Celebrated every four years, the festival is dedicated to the dead, whose souls, according to lore, are guided back to earth by the lamps glow. The festival was originally pagan but was incorporated by the Catholic Church. PHOTOGRAPH: MARIO LAPORTA

Kosovo team fail to find mass graves

Jonathan Steele

EUROPEAN Union observers found no evidence of the mass graves reported in the Kosovo town of Oraovac, the team's Austrian leader, Walter Ebenberger, said yesterday.

The team visited Oraovac after Swedish and Austrian newspapers reported eyewitness accounts of bodies being dumped there shortly after the Serbs regained control of the town two weeks ago.

"We have been out with one of our field teams," Mr Ebenberger said. "There are allegedly single graves with names [on them] but no mass graves." A Reuters Television crew said they were shown a freshly ploughed patch of

earth, covered with rubbish, at the edge of a Muslim cemetery where there was a strong smell of decaying bodies.

At the same site a Washington Post reporter, Jeffrey Smith, counted 12 thin wooden sticks with the markings "NN" carved with a knife, denoting to Serbian speakers that the identity of the bodies was unknown.

Farther down the path five more large areas had been excavated, each marked by a series of 21 larger wooden signs bearing a four-digit number and the name of a dead person.

"The presence of at least 33 fresh graves in Oraovac, reportedly dug on July 30, is not startling by itself," Mr Smith reported. "Serbian authorities have said 60 people died during three days of

A news photographer takes pictures of markings on fresh graves in the town of Oraovac. Despite reports of bodies being dumped there after the Serbs regained control of the town, an EU mission found no evidence of mass graves. PHOTOGRAPH: SERJAN LUC



fighting between Serbs and ethnic Albanians in and around the city, beginning July 17, that ended with Serbian forces overrunning the city."

Oraovac, 30 miles southwest of Kosovo's capital Pristina, was the scene of fierce battles between Serb forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army, which is fighting for independence from Serb rule.

The number of victims is unclear because journalists, aid workers and diplomatic

observers were barred from the town for several days after the battle ended.

Hundreds of people — virtually the town's entire Albanian population — fled in disarray, making it hard for survivors to be sure whether

missing relatives were dead or alive. The Committee for the Protection of Human Rights in Pristina claimed that 60 civilians died in the fighting.

Veton Surroi, a prominent ethnic Albanian politician who visited the site on Tuesday, said that as many as 200 Albanians were killed, most of them in a mosque where they had taken refuge.

A report in the Austrian daily Die Presse claimed yesterday that fresh graves contained the bodies of more than 500 people, including children. Serbia's deputy information minister, Radmila Vasic, denied the report.

A Serb official said police had buried "a number of bodies" in the Oraovac area when they were not claimed for more than a week.

Kohl claws back towards fifth term

Denis Staunton in Berlin

GERMANY'S embattled chancellor, Helmut Kohl, seemed poised for a dramatic comeback in next month's federal election yesterday as an opinion poll showed his Christian Democrats (CDU) closing on the opposition Social Democrats (SPD).

As SPD leaders warned that victory could yet slip from their grasp, some activists blamed the party's slick, New Labour-style campaign for their falling support.

A poll by the Emnid institute showed the SPD share of the vote falling to 40 per cent as the CDU share rose to 37 per cent, leaving the narrowest gap between the parties since February.

The SPD campaign strategist, Rodo Hombach, warned that the party could lose the election because of over-confidence and writing off Mr Kohl too soon.

"The present situation carries risks for the SPD. If the impression is given that Kohl is no longer a threat, that could be dangerous," he said.

The SPD campaign recalls Labour's strategy in Britain last year: new management is being used to influence the media agenda and focus groups are helping to fine-tune policy positions. The party has even produced a laminated card listing the election pledges of their leader, Gerhard Schröder.

The strategy was successful at first, the SPD rising steadily in the polls as Mr Kohl appeared to flounder. But the Social Democrats' poll ratings have fallen continuously since May and the country's economic recovery seems likely to pay dividends for the chancellor.

"Many voters are still undecided. Many of these belong to the CDU camp. The SPD has probably exploited its potential voting group to the full," Richard Hilmer of the Infra-test polling group said.

Mr Schröder, who was in Washington yesterday to meet President Clinton, is unlikely to abandon his Blairite

strategy. But, as Britain's economy enters troubled waters, he has distanced himself from Tony Blair.

Before he left for Washington, Mr Schröder was at pains to point out that although he shared Mr Blair's commitment to the "Third Way", he would govern differently.

"Mr Blair has to extend the education system beyond the top 10,000 and create a health service that deserves the name. We have entirely different problems; we have to dismantle bureaucracy," he said.

The chancellor, who is on holiday in Austria, said on television that he was "very certain" that his centre-right coalition would be returned for a record fifth term September 27. He predicted that unemployment would fall below 4 million by the autumn and defended his management of the economy, despite the huge public debt.

"Our public debt is the cost of reunification," he said, adding that foreign observers understood this better than many Germans.

The outcome of the election could depend on the performance of the smaller parties, especially the environmentalist Greens and Mr Kohl's allies in the Liberal Free Democrats (FDP). The Emnid poll put support for both parties at 6 per cent, just above the minimum needed to win seats in parliament.

Many analysts are predicting a grand coalition of Christian Democrats and Social Democrats, but Mr Kohl has said that he will not take part in any such arrangement.

Mr Schröder has not ruled out governing with the CDU, but in an interview in today's paper Die Zeit he identified the defence minister, Volker Rühe, as his favoured partner rather than Wolfgang Schäuble, Mr Kohl's supposed heir.

Mr Schröder ruled out forming a government with the support of the ex-communist Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) but insisted that his reasons were pragmatic rather than ideological.

Diary

Simon Bowers

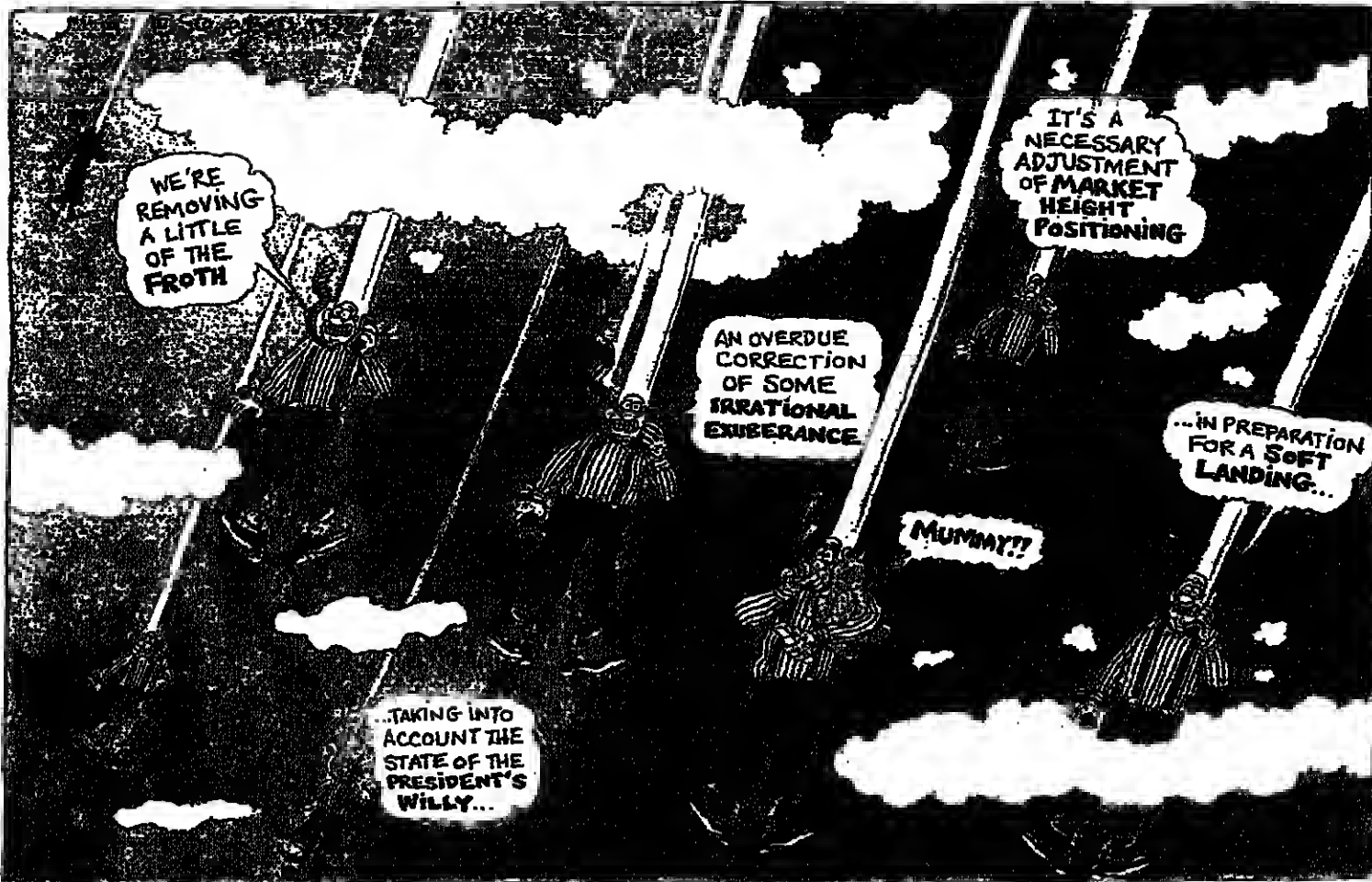
FOLLOWING yesterday's thrilling report that senior Government whip and vice-chamberlain to Her Majesty's House of Commons, Graham Allen, is using his ceremonial wand of state to switch television channels in the "whisper" room after the loss of their remote control, we have more news of channel-surfing in the corridors of power. It concerns the internal television network, enjoyed by the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall which carries a variety of stations and live coverage of the Commons and the Lords. Rumours of occasional classified broadcasts are officially denied, but no other explanation is proffered for a bizarre channel-changing ritual — mandarins and ministers alike must phone an official controller in the basement who switches the relevant television to the station requested. After recent allegations of more than 170,000 pornographic images downloaded from the internet at the MoD's hi-tech R&D arm, DERA, seditions rumours abound as to the nature of these nonexistent secret broadcasts. We call the MoD and invite them to dismiss talk of porn. "Random!" exclaims the press officer. "No. You have to subscribe to those channels, don't you? And that only goes on at night. Erm, people do stay overnight, but they'll only get to watch snuff if they've subscribed to it."

HOT on the tail of media excitement over the increasing numbers of an aggressive variety of wasp (Dolichovespula media) in Britain this summer, the Independent has news of a further wasp scare. "The British ladybird is being wiped out by a tiny parasitic wasp," reports their science editor, Irene Geoghegan of the Scottish Crops Research Institute in Dundee. The paper: "The interaction of this wasp with its host is truly gruesome. The wasp locates a ladybird and lays a single egg inside it. . . . By the time the ladybird dies of starvation, the wasp has hatched from its cocoon and it's immediately ready to seek out ladybirds for its own eggs." This is all very interesting, Irene, but you're skirting the news-worthy issue here. We call and put it to her straight: are these wasps wasps European? "No, they are particularly keen on a 40p discount offer, available on answering the following: 'What is the capital of Morocco? Is it (a) Paris, (b) New York or (c) Marrakesh?'"

WITH question marks over the sanity of Sunday Telegraph editor Dominic Lawson crased (in Monday's Guardian) the Diary is considering taking the paper once more. We are particularly keen on a 40p discount offer, available on answering the following: "What is the capital of Morocco? Is it (a) Paris, (b) New York or (c) Marrakesh?"

DIARY favourite Alastair Campbell has had a tough time this week. First the embittered Frank Field's remarks about spin doctoring on Radio 2's Jimmy Young Show and then yesterday's controversy over the publication of the public administration committee's report on spin doctoring — both of which have been seen by some to reflect unfavourably on Alastair. Wisely he has taken a holiday. We call Downing Street to ask if he has returned to his favoured summer retreat, the Riviera. "His holiday plans are a matter for him," says a press officer. "I really can't see how they are of public interest." Al's old friend Nme Rinaudo of Nice proves more forthcoming, and confirms a booking for R Giggoli at "Hotel" — or as Al once lovingly described it for Forum magazine, her "high class human communication centre."

STEPHEN Billingham of Wycombe has received a letter from his local Tory MP, Ray Whitney. It asks supporters to sell raffle tickets on behalf of the local party. "After the general election," writes Ray, "some Conservatives wondered whether there was a future for our party at all. I don't believe anyone has any doubt today." Stephen is a Lib Dem councillor.



Faced with Labour's lads, I feel like a lover who has been abandoned

Helen Wilkinson



IHAVE a confession to make. I am an archetypal new Labourite, as surely as I am one of Thatcher's children. Like many working class kids of my generation, I benefited from access to a university education. I bought into middle class values and aspirations for success and achievement.

New Labour appealed because it celebrated upward mobility. It spoke to me as a woman in a way that old Labour, steeped in macho labourist culture, could not.

I have never doubted the modernisation process that gave birth to new Labour. I have never agonised over whether in pursuit of power the party was jettisoning its principles and selling itself short.

That is, until now. Less than two years into the Government's first term, I feel uneasy. I feel like a lover who has been abandoned and who fears she is about to discover a betrayal, and I find myself recoiling and seeking solace in the arms of the only other Labour I know.

I cannot pinpoint precisely when my journey away from new Labour began. But my recent visit to Britain after a 10-month sabbatical in America certainly focused the mind. Derek Draper was on the front page of the Observer. As the story unfolded in the newspapers the photo images focused on the boys (yes, all boys) surrounding new Labour. New Labour women have been noticeably absent from this scandal.

Where it really counts lobbying, policy wonkery and spin mastery power remains firmly in male hands. Indeed, for all the talk of the feminisation of the economy, politics and lobbying remain male industries... and, as Draper

revealed, this is where the new establishment boys like to play.

Blair's internal coterie is predominantly male, as is Brown's. There are only two women in the Downing Street Policy Unit. The football imagery of Labour coming home played out during the 1996 European championship should have been a portent. The sporting metaphors have continued. Blair is photographed enjoying a beer and playing football with Lionel Jospin, and it is said that the Prime Minister likes nothing more after an afternoon's policy brainstorming at Chequers than to unwind by playing football with his bright young things.

The Downing Street Policy Unit, it is said, regularly plays five-a-side with other new generation acolytes such as Ben Wegg-Prosser, Peter Mandelson's aide.

This "new lad" culture seems harmless enough, and is justified in the interests of team bonding. The problem is that "team bonding" too readily turns into male bonding. The old boys' network may have progressed from golf to football but the fundamental rules are the same.

The men remain in charge with old Labour's macho labourist culture replaced by a subtler, covert and insidious laddishness, all the more alienating for being steeped in predominantly middle class values.

As a teenager, I felt alienated by an Old Labour political culture that did not know how to deal with women. Now I feel an outsider in a new Labour which parades rootless, individualistic, brash and boastful boys.

The political game has become a breeding ground in control freaks, and addictive

personalities. Politics itself can become like a drug, the media or money providing the quick fix. It's notable that control freaks and addicts of some description gather around new Labour's inner circle (Alastair Campbell is a former alcoholic turned media addict, Gordon Brown a self-confessed workaholic, Derek Draper a media and political addict). There are signs that this addictive culture has already begun to take hold in the heart of new Labour.

The boys enjoy unprecedented personal power and influence, whether they are insiders (like Campbell) or outsiders (like Draper). Egocentric, brash and boastful, they are scornful of mere politicians and parliamentarians (even the party itself), since they momentarily cast aside their cynicism to believe their own media-spun rhetoric that it is they who have created new Labour and they who can derive power, status, and even money, in controlling access to the 17 people who "count".

THIS love of power, this fixation on control, is very Thatcherite (and many of the new Labour acolytes are Thatcher's children). But it is new Labour's greatest weakness. Because taken to its extreme, politics becomes only the manipulation of press copy, rather than process of democratic ideals.

The corrosive effects of this culture are becoming self-evident. Moving in new Labour circles, it is not uncommon to hear the spin-masters arrogantly dismissing criticism of the Government as personal rather than political, the product of bitter resentments because certain individuals have been cut out of "the loop".

One could argue that the cancer that threatens to eat away at the heart of new Labour is the love of power, and control for its own sake. This love of power could become, as it did for Margaret Thatcher, new Labour's Achilles heel.

Helen Wilkinson co-founded the think-tank Demos. This is extracted from her full article which is to appear in this week's New Statesman.

This line of reasoning not only assumes that the raison d'être of outsiders is to wait patiently like Pavlov's dog to be given access to the inner circle, it also assumes that many such outsiders can and will be bought off by patronage.

The reality is that insiders and outsiders exist in a state of interdependence. Insiders depend on outsiders to act as a check against human fallibility to keep them connected and informed; insiders teach outsiders the virtues of pragmatism and compromise.

If the key players around new Labour were able to recognise this mutual dependence, they would renounce not just their addiction to control, their perfectionism; they would also be recognising that they do not have all the answers. They would be showing a willingness to engage in dialogue beyond the inner circle.

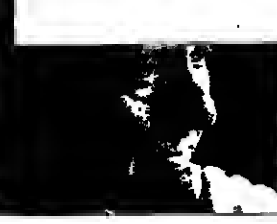
At its worst, new Labour comes dangerously close to inhabiting a world where politics becomes the manipulation of news copy, where the medium has become the message.

The hierarchy's flirtation with celebrity culture, combined with its media addiction, already blurs the boundaries between politics as an art-form and real life.

One could argue that the cancer that threatens to eat away at the heart of new Labour is the love of power, and control for its own sake. This love of power could become, as it did for Margaret Thatcher, new Labour's Achilles heel.

It is a coup to get Gus

Roy Hattersley



WHAT, the uninitiated may well ask, is all the fuss about? The appointment of Gus Macdonald as industry minister for Scotland, is, on any objective judgment, a coup — not for Lord Macdonald, as he will soon become, but for the Government which is lucky to secure his services.

Romantics will rejoice at the elevation of a character straight out of Samuel Smiles' *Self Help* — though not even George Stephenson, the prime object of Smiles' admiration, rose from a Glasgow shipyard to a peerage and a seat on the government front bench in the House of Lords.

More prosaic observers will simply believe that this Scottish economy has much to gain from his experience.

The predictable critics behaved predictably. They included passed-over Labour back-benchers, headline-grabbing Scottish Nationalists and Opposition spokesmen who (having no policy position to argue) have to deal in unconsidered trifles. But a number of reasonable commentators have augmented the unreasonable objections.

They have written about his appointment as if the Government was doing Macdonald a favour by allowing him to become a minister. From the little I know of him, I would gamble that he will enjoy the job. But I doubt if he went looking for it, or the peerage.

The accusation of "cronyism" is clearly absurd. Cronyism is when a Prime Minister does favours for his friends, elevating them to positions which their talents do not justify. It is not cronyism when the chairman of a great media group gives up his salary and sells his shares in order to sweat around the world trying to persuade Japanese electronic companies to relocate on the Clyde. It is "public service". That phrase may have been deleted from the Tory Party's lexicon. But that does not mean that sensible columnists have joined the chorus of disapproval.

LORDS Woolton, Mills, Chalfont and Foot — each with talents to offer — were parachuted into Whitehall with nothing like the same hostility. Fortunately, for the government, they joined had not already been tarred with the cronyism brush. And their elevations were not announced with a total disregard for the way in which the news would be received. If Macdonald had been part of last week's reshuffle ("to be effective as soon as his Scottish Media Group shares are sold") his

appointment would have been treated as a triumph. Donald Dewar, on Tuesday morning radio, recovered some ground with the essential but slightly unconvincing revelation that Macdonald was his nominee. But it was the counter attack of a retreating government.

Clearly, the Number 10 press office is not half as competent as the myth-makers pretend. It is accident prone because it is arrogant and believes that intimidation is a substitute for information. In opposition, brutality was enough. In government, something more constructive is needed. Virtually every mistake that this government has made — from Bernie Ecclestone's million pounds to the abolition of the single parent supplement — has been compounded by media mismanagement.

All you need to know about the shortcomings of the Downing Street press office is encapsulated in the story of Alastair Campbell controlling Cabinet Ministers' television appearances. Forgive the boast, but I have been kept off Panorama by Sir Trevor Lloyd-Hughes, Mr Joe Haines and Sir Thomas MacCauley. They exercised their powers on the authority of a letter, which began, "I have been instructed by the Prime Minister, maintaining the courteous notion that they carried a message rather than issued an instruction. If this letter had been employed last year, a great deal of resentment would have been avoided."

Long, long ago, Bill Moyers — press secretary to Lyndon Johnson — told me that once the spokesman becomes a personality, the person for whom he speaks is in trouble. For the Prime Minister and the Government, that is only part of the media problem. The press office is dangerously short of friends. Each day it has to deal

It is not cronyism to give up your salary like this. It is public service

with journalists it has humiliated. The men and women who have been rubbished and ridiculed do not forget. As soon as there is a chance, they settle old scores.

Poor Gus Macdonald has been caught in the slipstream. Much of what has been said and written about him has no relationship to either his suitability for the job or the propriety of him taking it. But the way in which the Government does its business is increasingly resented, even when the decisions are desirable, or even admirable in themselves. No doubt his training in the shipyard (not to mention the bedroom) has toughened his skin and he will battle on despite the inauspicious beginning. But the publicity surrounding his appointment confirms a gloomy truth. Those of us who thought that the Downing Street press office was nasty but competent were only half right.

My agency is getting through a million dollars a day organising Sudanese food airdrops. But for what?

Unnatural disaster

Catherine Bertini



tional community, widespread fighting and a ban on relief flights by the Sudanese government have resulted in a much worse crisis today.

Now that pictures of the devastation are arriving on front pages and TV screens practically every day, the world is waking up to the tragic reality — that people are dying, at an average of 50 a day in Wau, one of the hardest hit areas.

The World Food Programme is currently running the largest airdrop operation in history at a cost of one million dollars a day; funded in large part by Britain and the US. But what could the world have done to prevent this horror? In the case of Sudan, preventing famine is more than just a question of getting food fast to those who need it. This only serves as a Band-Aid if the war, the root cause of their

suffering, is not resolved. For Sudan, the necessary tools are diplomacy and mediation.

That is why I am encouraged by the British Government's recent brokerage of a three-month ceasefire between Sudanese government forces and the SPLA. Foreign Office Minister Derek Fatchett's successful diplomacy is a fine example of how the international community can address the root cause of the famine.

But they should not stop there. The international community should take advantage of the ceasefire agreement to help negotiate a lasting peace.

For nearly a decade, the world Food Programme and its partners have been delivering tens of thousands of tons of food to needy Sudanese through the umbrella organisation Operation Lifeline Sudan. Since 1992 we have deliv-

ered more than 360,000 tons to 4.7 million victims.

Since the Sudanese government gave us access to previously closed areas and authorisation to fly more planes, the pace of WFP's food deliveries has skyrocketed. In January, at the height of the fighting, we were barely able to deliver 150 metric tons by air. In July, we delivered approximately 10,000 tons and this month we should reach our target of 15,000 tons a month to war-affected areas. This will be enough food to feed approximately 2.6 million people.

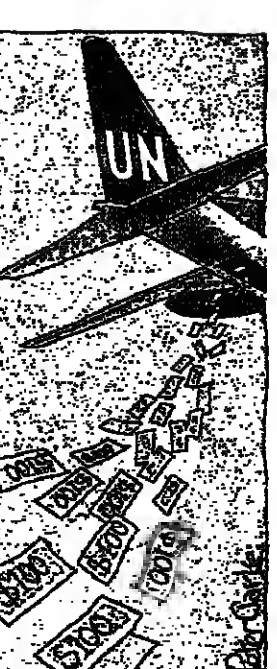
But all that we do will still probably not be enough. Even if we prevent people from dying from hunger next month, who is to say that if the ceasefire fails, all our efforts won't be lost once more? We will continue providing aid, even if it is extremely expensive and logistically

complex. As a humanitarian organisation, that is our job and we will strive to feed every innocent hungry person in Sudan, as long as we have the funding and can safely do so.

But the harder problem — an end to the war — is not for us to solve. It is the job of politicians. Governments should have a greater interest in stopping Sudan's war because they know their constituents suffer from "donor fatigue", an exasperation with funding humanitarian efforts that have no end in sight.

Likewise, leaders should recognise that the key to renewing the commitment to food aid is to show the world that aid does not have to last forever because the suffering can be stopped.

And governments and constituents alike should be interested simply be-



cause we all have a moral obligation to prevent innocent people from dying.

The world can remain hopeful about the peace talks taking place in Addis Ababa. This week between the SPLA and the government, but hope is not enough.

So many years after the start of this bloodshed, we know there will be no quick fixes or easy solutions, but it is time that the international community began to prioritise it so deeply de-serve. With strong commitment and pressure from the international community, there will never be an end to hunger in Sudan. One million dollars a day is very expensive Band-Aid. Shouldn't we be investing even more in a cure?

Catherine Bertini is the Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme.

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Saddam's incitement

The UN should stay cool

IRAQ IS making all the running in the latest crisis with the UN — and the question why is the one we urgently need to answer. Yesterday's call from the parliament in Baghdad for an immediate end to co-operation with UN weapons inspectors ratcheted up the tension another unilateral notch. Yet it came only hours after the chief weapons inspector Richard Butler had told the BBC that the collapse of his talks in Baghdad with deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz was "not a crisis".

To make the picture more puzzling, it appears that Iraq is not so far from satisfying the requirements of the Security Council as hawkish commentators are suggesting. Certainly, the inspectors have established that Iraq after the Gulf war managed to conceal amazingly large quantities of weapons of mass destruction. The Baghdad regime continued to prevaricate and conceal as long as it could, only admitting the most damaging facts (particularly in the biological sphere) when compelled to by chance discovery. Yet again by Mr Butler's account yesterday, the UN is now "very close" in the areas both of missiles and of chemical weapons. Indeed, he explained, the UN special commission is now close to saying that Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction in some areas. The biological weapons area is still the one where evidence of compliance remains hardest to gather, and where Mr Butler says that "Iraq has never told us anything like the truth."

What are we to conclude from all this? Saddam's regime was notorious even before the Gulf war for its use of chemical weapons — to which the West turned a blind eye at the time. To move on to biological weapons — easier to transport and harder to detect — would be a logical progression. At face value then the answer is clear: Baghdad is creating a new diplomatic storm in order to frustrate detection in the one area where it intends to maintain a capability at any cost. This is, however, too easy a conclusion. No doubt Saddam would be very happy to outwit the inspectors, but by allowing them to narrow down the area of ambiguity to this point he has already exposed himself. No one can know exactly what is in his mind, but his behaviour suggests a more complex motive. In the end, he simply does not want the process to finish and the garrison mentality which helps him to remain in power to be dissipated by more normal relations with the outside world. The weapons, if they exist, serve to bolster his rejectionist posture. In any case the threat that they may exist helps maintain an atmosphere of destabilisation from which he profits. It also earns reluctant admiration from a large section of Arab public opinion which is well aware (a) that Israel has nuclear weapons, (b) that the Middle East peace process is going nowhere, and therefore (c) is more receptive to the argument about double standards.

In the end, Iraq's real interest lies in clearing up the last area of ambiguity which stands in the way of lifting sanctions. Indeed, if it did so, this would shift the onus on to the US, which is reluctant to agree that sanctions should be lifted while Saddam stays in power. But sadly the interests of the Iraqi people differ from those of its ruling clique. Saddam thrives on tension, as he has shown time and time again. There is no easy

way of handling him — if there were, it would have been found long ago. Nor should the authority of the UN (on those issues which enjoy the full backing of a Security Council resolution) be flouted. But the Secretary General, Kofi Annan, is absolutely right not to dramatise the latest confrontation. It is a "major hiccup", and it may get worse, but ultimately it is part and parcel of the games that Saddam plays, and the UN should react as coolly as it knows how.

Secrets or lies?

We have the right to know

TODAY the Guardian publishes allegations of the most serious kind. They are made by David Shayler, the former MI5 agent who was arrested in Paris last weekend, and they accuse Britain of nothing less than state-sponsored terrorism against Libya. We do not publish them lightly: they appear in this morning's paper only after a long series of discussions both internally and with government lawyers, as we sought to be sure in our own minds that they represent no threat to national security. We are satisfied that they do not. But they do raise the gravest questions: about the conduct of our security services, of course, but also about one of the most basic freedoms of our society — freedom of speech.

There have long been rumours of Mr Shayler's claim that in 1996 MI5 ran, and bungled, a covert operation to assassinate Muammar Gaddafi. We, along with the entire British press, did not publish it because we were gagged by a tight injunction imposed when the former agent first surfaced last autumn. But yesterday Mr Shayler's allegations entered the public domain, via an article in the New York Times. It seemed

to us absurd to continue to keep British readers in the dark on the actions of a secret service which we pay for and which acts in our name — while American readers were allowed to be fully informed. The absurdity of that situation has already been recognised in law, with the landmark 1991 ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in the Spycatcher case — in which the Guardian was a lead player. Back then Britons were in the farcical situation of being allowed to read a book in New York which they could not buy in London. Eventually the Court ruled that, once information had entered the public sphere, there was no justification for keeping it away from these shores: to resist would be to make the law an ass. In the era of the Internet, where information is an instant, global commodity, that logic is sounder than ever — and it is the basis of our action today.

Moreover, these allegations have not been made in a fringe, flaky publication: they appear in the New York Times, perhaps America's most respected newspaper. Nor are the charges a matter of mere political embarrassment: they sketch a picture of an intelligence agency out to murder the head of a foreign government. We are not saying these claims are true; we are simply insisting on the right to find out if they are true or not. And that means publication — in the country where those charges matter most.

Squaring circles

Magicians, heal thyself

AFTER THE trade unions and the Labour Party, another great British institution — the Magic Circle — is poised for change (unless, of course, it's all just a trick). The Magic Circle has survived for 94 years

without anybody outside knowing much about it. Indeed many people will be surprised that it has managed to survive at all in an age when new technology can do so many dazzling things without recourse to sleight of hand. We probably wouldn't have known anything about its inner workings for another century had a split not developed resulting in — horror of horrors — a contested election for president. Unless someone can pull something out of a hat there will be faction fights, even a split.

Since only 10 per cent of members are likely to attend the annual meeting in London in September — many seem to have disappeared — both sides are mailing as many people as they can. David Berglas, famous for his thought-transmission experiments on television, doesn't seem to have read the minds of his own members so successfully. He resigned earlier this year only to withdraw his resignation later (now you see it, now you don't) — thereby prompting the emergence of a rival faction led by Michael Bailey, a retired advertising executive. His faction (according to the London Evening Standard) has accused Berglas of the ultimate crime of 1998 — cronyism. If any magician knew how to make that vanish he or she could soon earn enough money to pack up their top hat and retire. Mr Bailey does have a trick up his sleeve. He has plans to bring the society into the twentieth century including something called "democratic elections" — a move which we applaud. Alas, as in so many industrial disputes, no one can wave a wand to settle differences by magic. It is therefore to be hoped that the world's most prestigious, not to say prestidigitational, magic society can solve its problems and, above all, avoid a split down the middle into two camps. The "Magic Semi-Circle" just doesn't have the same ring about it, does it?

Letters to the Editor

Hey, big bender!

IT'S wonderful that the pink dollar keeps Sydney out of the red (Report, August 4). I was always of the opinion that lesbians and gays deserve equality because any other stance is morally unacceptable. I am now enlightened: lesbians and gays deserve equal rights because they like shopping. Keith Collins, Dungeness, Kent.

CONGRATULATIONS to Nick Davies (You're wrong, Frank, August 4). When we say someone suffers from welfare dependency, we say only that he suffers from having nothing else to depend on. Any cure for welfare dependency must therefore come from outside welfare. Does anyone in this Government dare tell Tony Blair? Earl Russell, House of Lords.

WOULD be interested to know the basis for your assertion that the word "bengel" derives from "bengel" the German for "stirrup" (Pass Notes, August 5). I had always assumed that it derived from the Yiddish "bengel", itself a derivation of the Middle High German "bungel" meaning "ring". I will stick with this more apposite explanation. Mark Levy, London.

LAUDANUM. (Letters, July 30): circa the fifties, take your own bottle into any chemist and buy All Fours. Mix into melted Golden Syrup, dose one dessert spoon as demanded. It was very good as a child suppressor. Norma Davies, Banwell, Somerset.

CONGRATULATIONS to Armando Iannucci on his all too accurate parody of Radio 3's sad decline (G2, August 4). He will be sadly missed when the BBC fails to renew his contract. David Lewis, London.

HARRY Enfield says the only time he stayed awake through a play was when a girl took all her clothes off in Equus (Arts, August 5). If he had really been awake he might have noticed that the naked person was a boy. George Wolfe, Hope Valley, Derbyshire.

Shayler: the official view

CRIMINAL proceedings have commenced against Mr David Shayler under the Official Secrets Act 1989 (A term of those absurd Spycatcher days, August 5). The normal rules about contempt of court in criminal proceedings apply and there is a strict limit to what can be published about his case.

I should, however, like to correct recent suggestions that the Government has obtained a "blanket" injunction against him or that there is confusion about its effect. The civil injunctions obtained last September prevent Mr Shayler and others from disclosing information which he obtained in the course of his employment in the Security Service.

But they are not "blanket" injunctions. They specifically forbid both the repetition of information disclosed in the Mail on Sunday last August, and for new disclosures if formal authority is obtained beforehand.

Nor is this the Government "gagging" or stifling legitimate criticism of the Security Service or stories which are obtained by other means. The only objective is to stop disclosures which would cause real damage to national security.

I realise that those wishing to publish stories deriving from Mr Shayler may gen-

inely believe that they cause no damage. Sadly their assessment is sometimes very wrong. Those publishing stories which carry a risk of breaching the law: they can also risk lives.

Lord Williams of Mostyn, Minister of State, Home Office.

SOME aspects of MI5's vetting work may come within the remit of the Data Protection Act (Letters, August 5) but what about the Security Service's failed card index?

US State Department files reveal that in 1940 the deputy director, Sir Eric Holt Wilson, told the Americans that the Security Service's central index of persons suspected of anti-British activity totalled 4,500,000 names. Holt-Wilson added that "the index is used freely by British industry and government departments" and for new disclosures if formal authority is obtained beforehand.

Some records were destroyed during the war but, presumably, other names were added after the war. What happens to this massive intrusion into people's civil liberties?

Stephen Dorrell, Holmfirth, Huddersfield.

DAVID Shayler suggests that British intelligence is incompetent and inefficient

and had plotted the assassination of Colonel Gaddafi (Runaway MI5 agent faces trial, August 5). In 1996 Britain, under Mrs Thatcher, did support the American attempt to use F-111s based in the UK to kill him.

We have obtained 10 of the timely and accurate warnings which were available to UK intelligence before our loved ones were murdered over Lockerbie in 1988. We repeatedly requested an inquiry into why these warnings were not acted upon. Mrs Thatcher rejected our requests.

At the one permitted fatal accident inquiry, public interest immunity certificates were prepared by her Cabinet, to "protect" certain documents. Nevertheless the FAI, though forbidden to look at intelligence aspects, did show that, because the 747 involved had been cleared from empty at Heathrow, the bomb must have been loaded there, wherever it may have originated; it concluded that the aircraft was under the "host state" protection of the UK.

The present government has little to lose by granting our request for an inquiry into why MI5 and MI6 failed our families in 1988. Dr Jim Swire, UK Families-Flight 103, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire.

and to many people sacred, World Heritage Land. Dig a too-short tunnel and its portals would engage the visitor's eye long before the rest of the landscape, let alone the stones.

Money is now to come from the roads programme and from Heritage. Excellent. But not quite enough. So now the chase must be on for money to pay for the proper long-bored tunnel. Perhaps some of Gordon Brown's "museum" can come this way? This is our largest open-air museum, and its associated artifacts are in the British Museum and the Devises and Salisbury Museums.

Alternatively the Stonehenge Protection Society of the 1920s, which raised money for the purchase of the land round the stones, could be revived. How much do we need? Lord Kennet, House of Lords.

Clinton cracks

WHY does that nasty Saddam have to cause so much trouble for President Clinton? And always just when the poor man seems to be in most trouble with Monica Lewinsky. It really is too inconsiderate of him. David Holmes, London.

If the stain on Monica Lewinsky's dress does come from President Clinton, does that mean she's taken him to the cleaners? Bob Ford, Halton-on-Lune, Lancs.

AND if the DNA tests are conclusive, will Bill Clinton get his comeuppance? Peter Stockill, Middlesbrough.

Tunnel vision

THE Government's decision to spend real money — in five years' time — on Stonehenge's setting is welcome. It gives time for fine-tuning. In 1994, the then director general of the National Trust stated that the Trust and English Heritage had "concluded that the only feasible on-line route [for the A303] which... meets the essential requirements of this World Heritage Site, is a long bored tunnel starting east of New King Barrows".

So a long bored tunnel there has to be: this was the consensus of two public consultations — by English Heritage in 1994 and the Highways Agency in 1995. Cut-and-cover would leave a massive, permanent scar and would, during construction, destroy several acres of archaeology-strewn,

and to many people sacred, World Heritage Land. Dig a too-short tunnel and its portals would engage the visitor's eye long before the rest of the landscape, let alone the stones.

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A word from the Lord Chancellor

ANDREW Puddlephat (Letters, July 23) is mistaken when he writes that I have undergone a change of heart about an independent human rights commission.

In the second reading of the Human Rights Bill in the House of Lords on November 3, 1997 I said: "The bill does not provide for the establishment of a human rights commission... although we have given this proposal much thought, we have concluded that a human rights commission is not central to our main task today, which is to incorporate the convention as promised in our election manifesto... we would want to be sure that a potential benefits of a human rights commission were sufficient to justify establishment

and funding for a new non-governmental organisation. We do not rule out a human rights commission in future, but our judgment is that it would be premature to provide for one now."

I also made plain on November 3 that the Government is giving active thought to a separate committee of each house, or a joint committee of both houses, with a specific human rights remit. We must now await the Human Rights Act bedding down in practice, in order to decide over time whether a human rights commission is needed as a weapon in our armoury for the protection of human rights in Britain. Irvine of Lairg, House of Lords.

From Lambeth to the laity: please have some faith in us

I CAN assure Madeleine Bunting that the plight of Christians in Pakistan courageously affirming their faith in the face of the blasphemy law, and the struggles of Anglicans around the world for basic rights, religious liberty and freedom from poverty are very real indeed (Unholy and unreal, August 5).

The Lambeth Conference, bringing together some 1,600 people (bishops, spouses and members of the Anglican Consultative Council) from the front line of so many cultures where the crucial issues of our time are being fought out, is a uniquely authoritative forum. It brings together people from the grassroots of a great variety of cultures.

To take just one issue, international debt: over the last 10 years Christians, with aid agencies, have taken the lead in pressing governments and the international institutions to lift the crippling burden of debt. It is top of the Lambeth

agenda, so that the huge momentum for Jubilee 2000 in Britain might be reproduced in other parts of the world through Anglican leaders. Rt Rev Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford.

NOW we understand why the Lambeth Conference is so poorly reported. You have a Religious Affairs Correspondent who thinks theology and prayer are "of little interest to anyone except (the) participants and a few devotees back home". While some of Madeleine Bunting's strictures may be true, particularly on homosexuality, she clearly has little sympathy with the conference.

It should not be impossible to report on the meaning of an event for over 70 million Anglicans throughout the world from a perspective within the Christian faith, rather than to impose your scepticism. Rev Peter Duncan, Haxby, York.

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Speaking up for the vulnerable and intimidated in rape cases

DEA Birkett's argument (Let the jury decide, G2, August 4) that the proposals about rape trials in the Home Office's report, Speaking Up For Justice, amount to special treatment for women is wrong on two counts. Firstly the provisions would apply in cases of male rape — rape is no longer a gender specific crime. Secondly, the proposals about rape trials are a small part of a much wider project to look at the place and treatment of witnesses, and especially those who, for a variety of reasons, may be vulnerable or intimidated.

Judges have the right to intervene to prevent the badgering of witnesses, but most exercise this power with considerable caution. As a result rape victims spend a third more time in the witness box than victims of other serious assaults. To place one's faith in the judiciary, as the Lord Chief Justice requests, and DEA Birkett supports, means more women describing their experiences as "like a second rape" and the continuation of the present situation where fewer than one woman in 10 reporting rape sees her attacker convicted. Kate Cook, Campaign to End Rape, Gilt Fashers, Chief executive, YWCA of GB.

SPEAKING UP For Justice point made 20 years ago by the Heilbron Report and endorsed in the Sexual Offences Amendment Act (1976) that cross-examination of the complainant's sexual history should only be introduced when relevant. The problem is that the introduction of such evidence was left to the discretion of the judges, the very group that was allowing its introduction in the first place. Without the introduction of training or monitoring of trials, judges have continued in their old ways and research has shown that the introduction of sexual history ev-

idence goes far beyond the instant of relevance to the issues in the trial.

Canada, Australia and the US have all restricted such evidence. Here it is used in an attempt to discredit the victim's character. As the Dispatches documentary, Getting Away With Rape, indicated after earlier trials at Crown Courts in 1984, this is leading to serial rapists getting away with rape again and again. DEA Birkett ignores the fact that since 1976 the conviction rate for rape has dropped from 37 per cent to 9 per cent. Prof Sue Lees, University of North London.

FOR years the local council has subsidised Derbyshire County Cricket Club, arguably at the expense of other recreation, and has picked up the bill for maintenance of the ground. So grotesque has the club's character become that it is feared that the club's reputation for "sportsmen" who seek to induce dishonest decisions. So grotesque has the club's character become that it is feared that the club's reputation for "sportsmen" who seek to induce dishonest decisions.

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On the pitch

WHEN sporting officials questioned about their competence and integrity, let us hold on to the simple truth expressed by Alex Stewart (The serious art of restoring a measure of self-esteem, July 28): "while many do make mistakes, they do not do so on purpose". In other words, they are both human and honest — unlike the growing band of "sportslogomaniacs" who seek to induce dishonest decisions. So grotesque has the club's character become that it is feared that the club's reputation for "sportsmen" who seek to induce dishonest decisions.

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Solvent abuse

THE National Schizophrenia Fellowship has worked with over 4,000 police officers on how to approach people with a severe mental illness. All our evidence supports fears raised by the Maudsley Hospital (Leeds) weapon, Society, August 5) over CS gas increasingly being used in the restraint of people known to have a severe mental illness.

The failings of community care have put police in the front line of dealing with mental health crises 24 hours a day. They need the best training based on clear guidelines to protect the mentally ill, the police and health staff.

We know that the solvent used in CS spray acts directly on the nervous system. CS gas itself can cause heart problems, exacerbating the cardiac side-effects of some drug treatments for schizophrenia. The full interaction with psychiatric drugs is unknown, but potentially very dangerous. From calls to our advice line, we know the impression that police forces are using CS spray rather than sending sufficient numbers of officers to deal with a disturbance in a less confrontational manner.

Nurses and other bystanders need better guidance on dealing with the effects of CS gas. Police guidelines should be tightened up, and there should be a full review of the use of CS gas on people known to have a severe mental illness. CHIFF Prior, Chief executive, National Schizophrenia Fellowship.



Richard Dunn ... support for the programme-makers

PHOTOGRAPH: DICK BARNATT

Richard Dunn

Vision of the TV

WHAT people admired about Richard Dunn, who has died aged 54, was his grace and style. At 5ft 2in, the former Thames Television chief executive towered above his colleagues — and his courtesy stood out.

He joined Thames TV in 1978 as an assistant to Jeremy Isaacs, the then director of programmes. Within three years he was director of production and when Bryan Cowgill unexpectedly quit Thames, Sir Hugh Dundas made Dunn managing director of the station's television service.

There were many battles to be fought. Within Thames there was the fight against the station's union practices — the station stayed on air during one strike with the management running the service. A far bigger debate was ahead. This centred on the Thames documentary, *Death on the Rock*. This dealt with the SAS shooting of three IRA suspects in Gibraltar. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, denounced the programme in the House of Commons. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was raging. Neither had seen the programme.

Dunn resolutely defended the programme-makers. The programme went out, backed by the IBA and when the storm intensified Dunn and his then chairman Sir Ian Trethowan asked former Conservative minister Lord Windlesham to investigate the case. Windlesham com-

pletely cleared the programme. Thames walked tall, but Mrs Thatcher did not forget or forgive. There are still some who blame her because Thames lost its right to be a television company in the 1991 ITV franchise auction.

Interviewed by Paul Bonner, author of the forthcoming *Independent Television in Britain: Volume 2, 1981-92*, Dunn absolved the Independent Television Commission of being influenced by *Death on the Rock* in taking away Thames' franchise. "On the other hand," he added, "the programme had a significant influence on the Government's decision in 1988/90 to harden up the auction proposals." He added: "The ITC was affected by the clamour over *Death on the Rock* and whether it had been good judgment by the IBA to transmit it. It was George Thompson's IBA that gave the go ahead for *Death on the Rock*, it was George Russell's ITC that pronounced the death sentence on Thames."

Dunn was made 1,000 people redundant. Eight years later the programme profile of the victim, Carlton TV, still looks undisturbed by comparison with Thames.

Dunn was born in East Anglia, the son of an English army officer, and an Icelandic mother. Educated at Forest School in Essex and St John's College, Cambridge, where he read fine arts, he was active in sports — winning a boxing Blue — and in university drama. After a year's teaching in Saudi Arabia he joined

Pathé News. By the mid-1970s he was heading the cable franchise Swindon Viewpoint. Then came Thames.

After the loss of the franchise Thames survived as a production house, and its major shareholder, Thorn EMI, quickly sold it to Pearson. Again Dunn's luck was out. Instead of keeping him at Swindon, Greg Dyke, who had just left London Weekend Television, was brought in. Non-acrimoniously Dunn and Dyke realised there could only be one boss — Dyke.

Dunn went to News International, as executive director with a direct line to Rupert Murdoch. It worked for a while and it ended again amicably a year or so ago.

Recently Dunn had his own business, worked as an advisor to the Premier League and chaired a production house. He had held two of the major independent television jobs: chairman of ITN and chairman of the ITV Association. His work for the industry did affect the time he was able to give to Thames at a critical period.

When I talked to him on the telephone last Monday he was cheerful and forward looking, buoyed by the recovery to health of his beloved wife Virginia — Jigga — enthusiastic about seeing his eldest son row for the Great Britain junior side in this weekend's world championships.

Dunn was a leader, an innovator — and a man possessed of a wide circle of friends.

Robert Phillips writes: I worked with Richard Dunn, one of my closest friends, for much of the last 20 years. He was a natural leader and a dedicated public service broadcaster, a man committed to the highest standards of programme-making. And he demanded from his colleagues the same high standards of integrity that he expected of himself. Firm and decisive he was kind, considerate — and interested in everyone working with or for him.

Richard Dunn had a great love of life, a massive enthusiasm for everything he did. Passionate about his family, he was never happier than when he was spending time with them. He still played occasional veterans' football and sailed. He was a highly skilled sailor, but retained an enormous determination to improve still further his expertise.

He took great pleasure from his son Andrew's success as an oarsman and William's and Elizabeth's skills on skis and on the tennis courts. And yet this same man who won a Blue as a heavyweight boxer while at university — and known to his friends as the "boxer in blue" — was also a very gifted artist.

I will miss beyond measure his friendship, companionship and that great sense of fun. His life and presence will burn bright in my memory.

Richard Dunn, television executive, born September 5, 1943; died August 4, 1998.

Maurice Bardèche

French with tears

MAURICE Bardèche, who has died aged 81, was always associated with his brother-in-law Robert Brasillach, who was shot as a traitor 53 years ago. The two were associated because Bardèche wanted it that way.

He regarded Brasillach's killing as a crime. He also continued to publicise the ideas they shared, a form of French fascism.

Bardèche was born into a modest family near Bourges in the Cher department. His life was transformed with a scholarship to Paris's Lycée Louis-le-Grand. There he met Brasillach and they both won admission to the Ecole Normale Supérieure, earning high qualifications.

Bardèche married Brasillach's sister. The two men entered journalism but while Brasillach was more overtly political, Bardèche remained a literary critic. In his *Souvenirs* (1993) he described himself as "a snail withdrawn into its shell".

But it was the right-wing newspapers that published his articles. When German troops occupied the Rhineland in 1936 he asked why he should lead a way of life with Germany would benefit Moscow and the Jews. In 1939 he co-wrote with Brasillach a book explaining his support for General Franco in the Spanish Civil War. The book was now regarded as having considerable literary value. In 1952 he founded the right-wing *Revue de l'Occident*.

The right grew with the outbreak of war in Algeria. Former Resistance leaders allied joined with Penitents to form the *Front National*. Bardèche made the issue clear, publishing his manifesto, *What Is Fascism?*

By the 1960s the New Right, *La Nouvelle Droite* had emerged. It first appeared under the protection of Bardèche, preaching elitism, European superiority and a form of racism. Bardèche was not totally in favour of the movement, nor was he fully in favour of the National Front as it emerged.

Bardèche saw himself as part of the tradition of the Edouardian right-wing nationalist Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras, founder of *L'Action Française*. He despised the world of the National Assembly, the political cliques which were the expression of individual ambitions and corruption. It was the contrast between the state of the Third Republic in the 1930s and the discipline, patriotism and the efficiency of Nazi Germany that had caused both Brasillach and Bardèche to look admiringly towards Berlin.

Bardèche was also the author of impressive studies on Proust and Balzac. He knew what it was to be respected and win literary prizes. In 1945, he always appears to have sought controversy, this was what he wanted. He is survived by his wife Suzanne and five children.

Douglas Johnson

Maurice Bardèche, writer, born October 1, 1907; died July 30, 1998.

Death Notices

ARMY, Frances Maud, peacefully on Friday, 31st July 1998. Much loved mother of 12, devoted wife of 47 years to the late John Maud. Funeral service at 11.00 am on Monday, August 10th, 1998, at 11.00 am, at the Church of St. Andrew, 11, St. Andrew's Road, London E16 1JH. Flowers or donations may be sent to the British Red Cross, 11, St. Andrew's Road, London E16 1JH.

MARTIN, Vera Gladys M.A. C.M.B., aged 80, of 11, St. Andrew's Road, London E16 1JH, died peacefully on Friday, 31st July 1998. Funeral service at 11.00 am on Monday, August 10th, 1998, at 11.00 am, at the Church of St. Andrew, 11, St. Andrew's Road, London E16 1JH. Flowers or donations may be sent to the British Red Cross, 11, St. Andrew's Road, London E16 1JH.

In Memoriam

HENRIETTA AND HAGGARD, August 6th and 6th 1942. In memory of the dead.

Memorial Services

GREENBROOK, Sir John Hedley, a memorial service will be held at 11.00 am on Monday, August 10th, 1998, at 11.00 am, at the Church of St. Andrew, 11, St. Andrew's Road, London E16 1JH. Flowers or donations may be sent to the British Red Cross, 11, St. Andrew's Road, London E16 1JH.

Richard Dunn

Viola Keats, actress, born March 27, 1911; died June 5, 1998.

Birthdays

By bluegrass pioneers such as Bill Monroe and Bobby Osborne when he toured the US with Cliff in 1957, spanning two weeks on the road with Ralph Stanley's band, then as now the leading traditional bluegrass outfit.

In 1975 the Echo Mountain Boys recorded their first LP. By then Andy was a key influence in the developing British bluegrass scene.

Having achieved early celebrity Andy had little scope to maintain the momentum. He chose to spend the rest of his life in and around Severn and Tumble, happily married to Patsy. He performed frequently in local pubs and clubs, but his music still came from the bluegrass hills of Kentucky. His wife survives him.

Andrew Townend

Andrew Charles Philip Townend, guitarist, born May 8, 1927; died July 15, 1998.

Corrections and Clarifications

A PHOTO caption in our TV preview of the BBC programme QED (page 20, G2 yesterday) said that the woman shown, named only as Wywyna, had killed her baby at birth. We are advised that after giving birth, she abandoned the baby in a rubbish bin, and that it survived. We apologise to the mother for this error, which was based on information supplied to us by the BBC TV publicity department.

SEVEN SISTERS Country Park is at Seaford in East Sussex, not East Essex, as wrongly stated in the Parents section (G2, page 9), yesterday.

TOM CONROY is the actor who appeared in the Gaiety Festival production of *The Dead School* a review in early editions on July 28 gave a wrong first name. Apologies to Mr Conroy.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 5559 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Letters to the Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 119, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ET. Fax: 0171 239 5597. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

Letters

David Phillips writes: I write as one who knew Gay Clifford (obituary, July 25) only as a fellow student at Workers' Education Association lectures in the past few years, during which she attended classes on various subjects, including music and medieval history.

In the last year or two she had become more and more articulate, often making witty and learned contributions. Sometimes, indeed, she would help out the lecturer with the odd technical term or accurate reference from, for example, classical sources. And she gave us many a laugh.

By the time her last illness overtook her your obituary's statement, that her mind had been destroyed and her memory had gone, seemed quite wrong. We shall miss her sorely.

Michael Healy writes: In his obituary (July 16) the Czechoslovak poet and scientist Miroslav Holub, Ewald Osers states that his poetry is eminently translatable. What a pity that none of his translators are mentioned by any of the three obituarists.

Alistair MacDonald

Faith in his advocacy

ALISTAIR MacDonald, who has died aged 71, was Sheriff of Shetland for 33 years and of Orkney for 24 years. His humanity, learning and wit made him a legend.

When appointed to Lerwick Sheriff Court in 1961, the 34-year-old advocate was Scotland's youngest sheriff. He became one of the most long-serving, retiring on his 65th birthday. From 1968 he covered Kirkwall Sheriff Court as well as Lerwick and, across the years, commuted thousands of miles by air — sometimes in atrocious weather — over the wild seas around Fair Isle.

Before taking up his duties, Alistair visited a mainland prison where convicted islanders served their sentences. The experience convinced him that jail was a place where he ought to avoid sending anyone if at all possible, particularly young people. Figures showed that the imprisonment rate for of-

fenders convicted in his courts fell well below the Scottish average. Serious recidivists were sent down, but MacDonald's liberal sentencing policy exasperated some of the local police force and sometimes caused angry bewilderment among victims of crime and bereaved relatives.

Alistair's religious convictions played a strong role when exercising discretion on the side of mercy. He believed in the value of remorse and repentance, and referred to the burden that convicted persons carried with them for life, particularly in a small community. That was sometimes punishment enough.

His interest in young people showed in his care and discretion when hearing cases involving children. He never wore wig and gown when interviewing young witnesses in his chambers. He believed justice for children should be administered sensitively and disapproved of the

new Children's Panels, which he saw as unnecessarily bureaucratic.

Born in Edinburgh, and brought up a Protestant, he converted to Catholicism aged 16. He was a devoted churchgoer and was surprised and delighted to be made a Catholic Knight of the Holy Sepulchre in 1968.

In Lerwick Alistair and his wife Jill quickly made friends. He was an enthusiastic, witty host, willing to debate anything. He threw himself into community projects, such as the campaign to hire Shetland's first economic development officer, Bob Storey, and to establish the Highlands and Islands Development Board. On one family evening he helped a bunch of fellow enthusiasts who borrowed a fish factory to prepare and can promotional samples of Shetland's splendid reest mutton soup. He became president of the Shetland Council of Social Service.

After retirement he stayed on in Shetland. He believed that his fellow islanders were the most kindly, hospitable and civilised people he had ever met. He particularly celebrated the absence of religious sectarianism in Shetland and in Orkney, where he had a second home for many years.

He read widely and delighted in pursuing his interest in medieval church architecture. While sheriff in Orkney he had visited St Magnus Cathedral every day. It inspired him. As he said, it had, after all, been built by good Catholics, long before the unfortunate misunderstandings that led to the Reformation.

He is survived by Jill, their son, daughter and two grandsons.

Jonathan Wills

Alistair Archibald MacDonald, advocate, born May 8, 1927; died July 15, 1998.



Alistair MacDonald ... inspired and inspiring

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Andrew Townend

Bluegrass in Sevenoaks

ANDREW Townend, who has died of pneumonia aged 46, was Britain's most gifted bluegrass musician, probably the only one of international stature. By the mid-1970s his originality and technical prowess exceeded that of any contemporary bluegrass mandolin player in the United States, and only recently have significant numbers of younger players begun to rival his compositional skills and bravura performances.

He also became an excellent jazz guitarist. The work of Tal Farlow (obituary, August 3) began to influence his mandolin style. Townend was a child prodigy. He was a pupil at Sevenoaks school in the 1960s and heavily influenced by the jazz and blues taught classic and music there. His older brother Richard became interested in bluegrass, the modern, commercial, acoustic music rooted in the Anglo-Celtic folk traditions of the south-eastern United States. Richard took up the five-string banjo and taught Andrew, then aged 11, to play the mandolin.

They formed the Echo Mountain Boys and were greatly assisted by the arrival

of bluegrass pioneers such as Bill Monroe and Bobby Osborne when he toured the US with Cliff in 1957, spanning two weeks on the road with Ralph Stanley's band, then as now the leading traditional bluegrass outfit.

In 1975 the Echo Mountain Boys recorded their first LP. By then Andy was a key influence in the developing British bluegrass scene.

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Alan Ward

Andrew Charles Philip Townend, guitarist, born May 8, 1927; died July 15, 1998.

Townend ... peerless style

in Sevenoaks of Bill Clifton, an American bluegrass musician. At the first Cambridge Folk Festival in 1965 the schoolboys won the bluegrass competition and later toured internationally with Clifton. Andy's first, complex mandolin solo and breaks far exceeded anything he had heard in Britain. He was acclaimed

A Country Diary

PORT MULGRAVE: Bays with jutting headlands characterise this scalloped stretch of the North Yorkshire coast. Some — like Runswick Bay and Robin Hood's Bay — are well-known holiday destinations. The beach at Port Mulgrave is often deserted, except for fossil collectors and a few fishermen. It wasn't always so quiet. Ironstone mining in the 19th century turned the bay into a hive of industry. In 1856 a harbour was built, so trucks of ore could be pushed from cliff-face mine tunnels on to a wooden gantry and tipped into ships. Mining ended in 1930, the machinery was scrapped and the harbour piers were demolished during wartime invasion scares. We could see the last vestige — a fragment of crumbling pier — from the top of Wilf's Way, a precipitous path named after Wilf Mackinder, a local resident who worked long and hard to improve ac-

cess to this beautiful little haven. The wheezy song of yellowhammers accompanied us through bracken, hramble and drifts of wood vetch's pale mauve, blue-veined flowers. Descending these cliffs is a trip through time, back to a Jurassic world when seas swarmed with ammonites — curiously-shelled, extinct cousins of today's squid. Their fossils are easily found, embedded in nodules that split with a deft blow from a geologist's hammer to reveal an exquisite chambered spiral shell. But the most delicate fossils here are ammonites compressed in rocks whose layers peel apart like the pages of a book. After a few attempts we struck lucky and turned a prehistoric page that exposed a bed of ammonites and lamp shells mineralised with iron pyrites, flashing gold in the first sunlight to strike their surface in more than 150 million years.

PHIL GATES

Viola Keats

VIOLA KEATS, who has died aged 87, was a vivacious redhead in great demand on stage and screen during the 1930s. Born in Douma, Perthshire, she played a great variety of parts with the Liverpool Repertory Company in 1930-2, before studying at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. In 1933 she made her first appearance on the London stage at the Apollo as Alex Millward in *The Dicksie Film*.

As a film actress at that time she made the film comedies *Too Many Wives*, *His Grace Gives Notice*, and *Enemy of the Police*. Several crime and murder mysteries included two directed by the young Michael Powell: *The Night of the Party* (1934) and *Her Last Affair* (1936) and there was a Russian romance *A Woman Alone* (1936).

During the next quarter of a century she concentrated on the stage, radio and television

in Britain and America. In 1950 she toured Australia as *Blanche DuBois* in *A Street Named Desire*.

Back in films in the 1960s, she appeared in *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone* (1961), *Tamara* (1963), and two super "coven" movies, *Witchcraft* (1964) in which she played Jack Hedley's mother and *The Witches* (1967) with Joan Fontaine.

Her later stage roles included Susan Shepherd in *The Wings of the Dove* (Haymarket, 1964), Lady Frinton in *Are You We All Savoy* (1967), and the Abbess in *Abelard and Heloise*. She married first Harold Peterson, and second William Kellner, who predeceased her. She spent her retirement years in Brighton.

Richard Daffy

Viola Keats, actress, born March 27, 1911; died June 5, 1998.

Birthdays

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AA pulls out of high street

Julia Finch

THE AA is to close its network of 142 high street shops and cut 650 jobs to concentrate resources on the roadside breakdown service, which faces tough competition from the combined operations of the RAC and Green Flag.

The Automobile Association, which dubs itself "the fourth emergency service", is also abandoning its own brand insurance policies, which provide cover for 30,000 motorists, and selling off its Home Assistance service, which provides emer-

gency plumbers, electricians and other tradesmen to 9,000 subscribers.

The AA described the cut-backs as "strategic developments that will result in improved value and levels of service for 8.4 million members", but they are the result of a review of operations ordered by director general John Maxwell, a former director of the Prudential, when he joined the organisation 18 months ago.

The cost-cutting comes in the wake of changes in the roadside breakdown business. In the past few months the US marketing group Centad has spent more than \$1.2 billion to take on the AA.

It paid \$200 million for National Car Parks, which includes the Green Flag breakdown service, and is now spending \$450 million to add the RAC's motoring services. That deal is providing 12,000 full members of the RAC's London club with windfall profits of £38,000 each.

In addition, Direct Line, Britain's biggest motor insurance company, has also moved into the breakdown business.

When the Centad deal is finalised, the AA will no longer have such a dominant position in the breakdown market and will have to fight to retain its market leader-

ship. The AA claims 47 per cent of the market, compared with the RAC's 30 per cent and Green Flag's 15 per cent.

A spokesman for the AA said: "The market has changed more in the last five years than it has in the last five years. It is now highly competitive."

Mr Maxwell pledged to improve standards within the association's core roadside business.

He said that £20 million was being invested in roadside assistance this year to get patrolmen to breakdowns more quickly and improve fix rates.

The association said its high street stores, which have been losing money for some

years, were the victim of changing consumer behaviour.

The shops had been set up so that members could pay their annual subscriptions, and to sell insurance, but consumers now prefer to conduct business over the telephone.

According to the AA, 80 per cent of its insurance and subscriptions inquiries are now dealt with in that way. Customers who have continued to visit their shops will be transferred to telephone call centres in the next year.

"There has been a change in retail behaviour," said an AA spokesman. "The move to telephone call-centres has been widespread in many

businesses and we are reacting to a change in demand from our customers."

The 30,000 motorists with AA-branded insurance, which was provided through a joint venture with Eagle Star and went on the market only 12 months ago, will be offered new policies through the AA Insurance Service brokerage at renewal time.

The GMB union, which represents most AA workers, said that it was disappointed at the closures.

Like the RAC, the AA is a mutual organisation owned by its members. A spokesman said it remained committed to that status and would not consider selling out.

Notebook

Liffe loses points in bourse game



Edited by Mark Milner

LIFFE's rivals in mainland Europe are stepping up the pressure. Yesterday executives from Eurex, the alliance of Zurich's Solfero and Frankfurt's DTF, now renamed Eurex Zurich, boasted that so far this year, their combined turnover was ahead of the London derivatives exchange — 125 million contracts compared with 122 million — making Eurex number one in Europe.

Competition is set to intensify. Eurex is planning the launch of one-month and three-month contracts, based on the benchmark bank rate, Euribor (European interbank offered rate) — products, which will be in direct competition with Libor (the London interbank offered rate) products. Just to help them get off the ground, there will be a fee-holiday during the initial months.

It is also trying to build up its links with other derivatives exchanges — SIMEX in Singapore and the Chicago Board of Trade, although the relationship with Paris' Matif is still proving tricky. In other words, it gives every appearance of having a well-planned strategy for expanding its product and geographical reach.

Compare that to the recent disarray at Liffe — the paralytic adoption of electronic trading, top-level departures, the loss of market share in the key bond futures contract — although a lot of the DTF's share of that business is coming from London.

Nevertheless, although daily competition is pretty cutthroat, relations may prove less intractable over the longer term. The German stock exchange, which is part of the same outfit as the DTF, is already coysing up to the London Stock Exchange.

Eurex chief executive Jörg Francke said yesterday that there was no movement on the derivatives side, but noted the new management team and structure at Liffe. Maybe both sides will indulge in some new thinking.

Top pay peers

IT IS easy to dismiss what goes on in the boardrooms of Britain's 100 biggest companies as exceptional. Take the question of boardroom pay, always a contentious issue. FTSE 100 bosses are then deemed to be on a limb, on a headline-grabbing course which means the rest of the country's boardrooms risk the ire of the Government, shareholder action or public opprobrium, even though they are innocent of any remuneration excess.

What is interesting about this morning's survey from Incomes Data Services and

Arthur Andersen is that the average pay-rise for top executives in the FTSE's largest 350 companies is within a whisker of the figure which the Guardian's Index of Top Executive Pay recently revealed for FTSE 100 bosses.

Clearly, the absolute rewards are different — bosses in the largest 100 companies can expect to pick up something like a third more than their peers further down the capitalisation rankings.

Quite right, too, when the size and often complexity of the businesses in question are taken into account.

More telling is that the "bad example" in terms of percentage increases, which many hoped was limited to industry's top echelons, is clearly more widespread.

Gordon Brown's efforts to enlist the support of regulators to pull the executives of privatised industries into line — now that most of the riches on their table have been snafled — will not do. Margaret Beckett tried to dodge the confrontation. Many regard the problem as insoluble.

But it could be one way in which the Department of Trade and Industry's new man, Peter Mandelson, could make an early impression.

He need not be worried about making many new enemies. The survey suggests more than one in three of Britain's senior finance directors already reckon that he is the wrong man for the job at the DTF.

Thinking cap

WITH each of the banks that used to be building societies reporting interim figures comes further evidence that, post-conversion, life in the mortgage market, the traditional core of their business, is proving tough.

In the first quarter, for example, the Woolwich took just 1.5 per cent of the market for net new mortgage lending.

Neither the Halifax nor the Abbey National, the established giants of Britain's home-loans business, has been setting the market alight either — although the latter at least has found some very profitable alternatives.

By contrast, Northern Rock, which is still a building society and proud of it, has managed to take 10 per cent of net new business.

That does not suddenly mean that the case for mutualism is unarguable — that banks who need to keep shareholders happy will never be able to match the building societies, who can offer better means to borrowers and savers.

The banks will undoubtedly find ways of fighting back, through cost-control measures or product innovation.

The Woolwich, for example, reckons that its new Open Plan mortgage, which comes with credit card and cheque book, will keep it competitive.

But it does mean that members of any building society considering conversion should think very hard before they agree to do so — on the grounds of self-interest as well as of principle.

Savers desert Woolwich to tune of £235m

Jill Treanor

SAVERS withdrew £235 million from their accounts with the Woolwich in the first six months of the year. The former building society also lost out in the mortgage market: its share of new lending in the first quarter was less than 1 per cent although this rose to 3.5 per cent by the end of June.

Woolwich, which yesterday announced a 12 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £240.4 million, usually has more than a 5 per cent share of mortgages. "It's continuing the pattern under which the mutual lenders are taking a much larger market share," one banking analyst said.

The other former building societies, such as the country's biggest lender, the Halifax, have also struggled to maintain their share of the fiercely competitive market.

John Stewart, Woolwich chief executive, said yesterday there was "a balance between market share and profitability" and stressed that the bank would not increase its share at the expense of profits.

The lower than usual share of the mortgage and savings markets was the result of "turbulence" after the former building society's flotation on

the stock market last year, he said. Savers and borrowers were effectively locked-in to the Woolwich ahead of the flotation to ensure they received their "windfall" of shares.

While analysts were disappointed by the bank's market share, its shares bucked the trend, ending up 25p at 337.5p, helped in part by its announcement that it will buy back between £150 million and £200 million of shares in the next few months.

Given the bank's size in comparison with its competitors, it has been cited regularly as a potential candidate for merger although Mr Stewart claimed yesterday that he was not speaking to any rivals.

The bank cut the number of its customers with mortgages in arrears and Mr Stewart warned about talking the economy into recession. "It'd be a little bit happier if interest rates didn't go up [any further]," he said.

The bank reduced its cost income ratio — used by the City as a measure of efficiency — to 43.8 per cent from nearly 44 per cent.

It increased its income from sales of unit trusts and PEPs by 70 per cent to £12.6 million and its insurance business increased its non-interest income by nine per cent over the same period last year.

Retail banking on cards

WOOLWICH is in talks about offering bank accounts through high-street retailers, which would continue the trend among banks to search for cheaper ways to sell financial services products, writes Jill Treanor.

John Stewart, Woolwich's chief executive, is talking to a few retailers which are already running loyalty schemes for their customers.

Possible candidates for a link could be petrol retailers such as Shell, which yesterday admitted that it was being talked with a number of companies about extending its loyalty card to include financial services. Other partners could be

retailers such as Boots and WH Smith, both of which offer loyalty schemes but offer no banking arrangements. However, neither of them are thought to be anxious to extend their loyalty cards to include banking.

Loyalty cards are attractive to banks because they offer detailed information about customers.

Most of the supermarket chains already have links with banks, either directly, such as Sainsbury's Bank, which is a link between the supermarket and Bank of Scotland, or indirectly, such as the arrangement Lloyds TSB has with Asda to put branches in its stores.

In need of spin



Peter Mandelson on the day of his appointment as Trade Secretary

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN REARDON

Finance chiefs judge Mandelson a doubtful asset

Julia Finch

MORE than one in three of Britain's senior financial directors are unhappy at the appointment of the Government's spin doctor-in-chief, Peter Mandelson, to head the Department of Trade and Industry.

Some 90 finance chiefs questioned last week thought that Prime Minister Tony Blair's decision to appoint the man nicknamed the Prince of Darkness to the role of Trade and Industry Secretary was a bad news for business.

In the survey of 253 directors by Reed Accountancy Personnel and Accountancy

Age magazine those opposed to Mr Mandelson's promotion criticised his lack of relevant experience and his image.

One said: "We need someone with a track record respected by captains of industry instead of this controversial figure."

Another asked: "How can anyone who has been a 'professional' politician all his life have any concept of what is good for UK business?"

Mr Mandelson does have some supporters. A fifth of those surveyed thought that the new Trade Secretary would be an asset to his track record and professional credentials.

"He is an achiever and a

good organiser," said one. "He won Labour the election so can only do good for the UK."

Another supporter, who was keen for the UK to move towards European monetary union, said the appointment would be "extremely useful".

The bulk of those surveyed had no opinion on Mr Mandelson's promotion and were willing to give him a chance to prove himself. David Callaghan, director of Reed Accountancy Personnel, said: "While his reputation has caused some financial directors to oppose the appointment, many more are open to persuasion and are prepared to give him time to make an impact on his department."

Hanson acts on clean-up risk

Roger Cove

HANSON, the rump of the 1980s conglomerate, yesterday signed a ground-breaking insurance deal that provides an escape from huge environmental risks — at one time assessed at \$2 billion (about £1.2 billion) — which dogged it throughout the 1980s.

The group has paid a \$275 million premium for a policy which leaves it exposed to only the first \$100 million of any claims for cleaning up land contaminated by one of the subsidiaries of a 1981 acquisition — the Beazer housebuilding and

construction business. The policy provides cover up to \$800 million, for an indefinite period and regardless of changes in American environmental law.

Alan Murray, head of the construction materials unit, Cornerstone, said the deal with Swiss Re and Zurich could be a model for future protection from environmental liability. "It is quite an innovative approach, which could provide a basis for dealing with other environmental sites in the US," he said.

But the policy is unlikely to speed up the rate at which the sites are cleaned up. Under pressure from the US Environmental Protection Agency work to remove the impact of

the chemicals has been continuing for several years and many of the sites have been returned to a safe condition.

Beazer, which has since been floated as a separate company, acquired the huge liabilities when it bought the US company, Koppers, in 1988. It sold off the chemical operations but was left with liability for cleaning up 119 sites which had been contaminated under Koppers' ownership, mainly because of poor control over the use of creosote in treating telegraph poles and railway sleepers.

Hanson acquired the liability when it bought Beazer in 1991, and was left with responsibility for cleaning up the sites when Beazer subse-

quently left the group. Originally, Hanson provided \$2.2 billion to cover the clean-up cost and has been spending about \$70 million a year for the past few years. By the end of last year, the provision had been reduced to around \$675 million — but uncertainty over the total exposure had damaged the group's standing in the City.

Mr Murray said: "This provides us with a degree of certainty going forward."

Yesterday's deal will also leave Hanson with an exceptional profit of \$140 million in this year's accounts, stemming from excess provisions and the settlement of outstanding claims under existing insurance policies.

British Bio gets new chairman

Julia Finch

FORMER ICI executive Christopher Hampton is to take over as chairman of troubled drug development firm British Biotech after the announcement yesterday that John Raisman is to leave at the same time as chief executive Keith McCullagh.

Mr Raisman has been a director of the firm since 1993 and chairman for more than three years.

British Bio has been dogged by controversy over the past five months, since sacking Dr Andrew Miller, its former head of clinical trials. Though the company initially tried to suggest that Dr Miller had left in protest at being passed over for promotion, it later

emerged that he had expressed concerns to major shareholders about the company's two key drug projects.

He then went public with his concerns, stating that Zalcitabine for pancreatic cancer was almost certainly useless and the cancer treatment marimastat — had no more than a 40 per cent chance of being effective.

And further allegations of insider dealing and boardroom tensions, Dr McCullagh, who founded the company, agreed to step down in September. The company has since been the subject of an investigation by the House of Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology, which is concerned that the British Bio scandal will undermine the credibility of the entire UK biotech industry.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.82	Germany 2.81	Malaysia 6.75	Singapore 2.77
Austria 13.73	Greece 467.69	Mexico 0.82	South Africa 5.88
Belgium 57.39	Hong Kong 12.33	Netherlands 3.16	Spain 237.74
Canada 2.40	India 68.42	New Zealand 3.08	Sweden 12.70
Cyprus 0.26	Ireland 1.11	Norway 12.05	Switzerland 2.87
Denmark 5.98	Israel 5.98	Portugal 285.75	Turkey 428.240
Finland 1.83	Italy 2.788	Saudi Arabia 8.03	USA 1.59
France 9.40			

Supplied by Reuters (excluding rupee, shilling and dollar)

12 FINANCE AND ECONOMICS

Output figures add to interest-rate dilemma for Bank's monetary policy committee

Factories bounce back

Mark Atkinson
Economics Correspondent

THE Bank of England's dilemma over interest-rate levels intensified yesterday when official manufacturing output figures showed the sector clawing its way out of recession, contradicting survey evidence of a deepening downturn.

Meanwhile separate evidence emerged that the services sector is still growing — albeit at a slowing rate — generating inflationary pressure.

The unexpectedly strong

data left the outcome of today's meeting of the Bank's monetary policy committee meeting finely balanced.

Although most City analysts still expect no change in policy given the undoubted slowdown in overall economic growth, some caution that it is robust enough to tempt the MPC to raise rates once more to ensure that the Government hits its 2.5 per cent inflation target.

"We still expect a rate hike," said Michael Saunders, UK economist at Salomon Smith Barney, the American investment bank.

According to the Office for National Statistics, manufac-

turing output grew by 0.1 per cent between April and June after falling in the two previous quarters — thereby satisfying the technical definition of recession.

Output was flat in June, but upward revisions to April and May's data meant that the sector inched ahead in the second quarter.

Although engineering output fell slightly, production rebounded in basic metals, pulp and paper, and rubber and plastics, the ONS said.

The figures appeared at odds with forward-looking surveys pointing to a deepening recession in manufacturing, although analysts said

the official data would probably soon catch up.

"Today's data are only a brief respite for manufacturing, and we expect it to continue to flirt with recession in the second half, rather than stage a recovery," said Kevin Darlington at Dutch bank ABN Amro.

Adam Cole, of HSBC Securities, described the data as a "false dawn".

The Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply's monthly service-sector survey recorded the fifth consecutive slowdown in the rate of expansion in July.

Its activity index slipped to 55.9 from 56.8 in June, with

any reading above 50 indicating growth.

However, the CIPS survey also showed that cost and price pressures remain obstinate. In particular, the tightness of the labour market was reflected in a further marked rise in wages and salaries.

"The manufacturing malaise is denting confidence about the future, but is not so far having a major effect," said John O'Sullivan of Greenwich NatWest.

Unless the MPC is certain that growth is slowing quickly enough to keep inflation on target, it may decide to apply the brakes again.

In addition to weighing up

the dangers of wage inflation, the MPC has been using its two-day meeting for a detailed discussion of the possible inflationary implications of new government spending plans and the minimum wage. Its decision will be announced today at noon.

Any increase is likely to run into a hail of criticism from industry, which is seeking a quarter-point cut in the cost of borrowing.

Ruth Lea, head of the policy unit at the Institute of Directors, said: "Monetary policy is now quite tight enough to contain whatever residual inflationary pressures there are in the economy."

Lisa Buckingham
City Editor

FORTY-NINE directors from Britain's 350 largest companies received more than £1 million in pay and bonuses last year, according to a survey published today by Incomes Data Services and Arthur Andersen.

That represents about one in 40 leading executives, 13 of whom — including Smith-Kline Beecham's Jan Leschley and Martin Sorrell at the advertising agency, WPP — picked up more than £2 million.

The research almost exactly mimicked the findings of a recent study of directors' earnings by the Guardian, which showed an average increase for the highest-paid directors of 18 per cent.

But whereas the Guardian examined the highest-paid directors in the largest 100 firms, the latest research, albeit more dated — suggests the best-remunerated directors in the biggest 350 companies received average rises of 27.8 per cent.

The authors of the IDS-Arthur Andersen study say: "All the signs are that boardroom pay is again going to come under close scrutiny from shareholders, the public and the Government."

The IDS study shows that pay rises for British bosses ranged from 626 per cent for the senior executive at the mini-investment bank, Close Brothers, to minus 80 per cent for John Little at British Land. While 13 chief executives exercised admirable restraint and took no pay rise at all, nearly one in 10 of those surveyed helped themselves to a remuneration rise of more than a quarter.

last year, before taking into account long-term incentives. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, has insisted that privatised utilities should reflect customer-service levels and be monitored by industry regulators.

Incomes Data Services, which said the climate over which said the median value of long-term incentives for FTSE bosses was £132,000 last year.

The research also reveals that most of the biggest packages came in the financial sector: the best-paid director at Johnson Matthey picked up £1.1 million; at Amvescap the total was £2.5 million; Close Brothers paid its top director £3.4 million; Mercury Asset Management's best-paid director earned £1.8 million; at Schroders the top pay was £1.1 million; and banking group Standard Chartered doled out £1.6 million to its best-paid executive.

But the highest-paid director out of all the 350 companies in the survey was Sam Chisholm, formerly of BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster, who earned £2.8 million — slightly more than £300,000 for every working day.

The IDS study shows that pay rises for British bosses ranged from 626 per cent for the senior executive at the mini-investment bank, Close Brothers, to minus 80 per cent for John Little at British Land. While 13 chief executives exercised admirable restraint and took no pay rise at all, nearly one in 10 of those surveyed helped themselves to a remuneration rise of more than a quarter.

Wall Street and City of London discount fears of cataclysmic collapse

Financial markets step away from brink

Don Atkinson and Mark Tran in New York

WALL Street and the City stepped back from the brink last night as share prices rallied after heavy selling on both sides of the Atlantic. Fears, however, remained that the problems that triggered the slide have not gone away.

Stalling profits in the US combined with heavy export competition from the bombed-out Far East still hang over western markets despite yesterday's recovery.

London's FTSE 100 index crashed nearly 165 points in early trading, pushed over the edge by Tuesday night's 299-point slide in the Dow Jones index. But with a 58-point rally in New York at the time of the London close, the FTSE ended down 103.6 points lower at 5632.5 — a loss of 1.8 per cent of its value.

Later, the Dow's rally slipped back to show a loss of 60 points an hour before the market closed, as doubts spread as to whether the selling was over.

European bourses, including London, had lost 3 per cent of their value during the worst point of the day, but ended just 2 per cent down. Helping to prop up continued the expectation of big profits from single-currency countries as they restructure, shed workers and merge into bigger cross-border units.

By contrast, both the US and Britain — which restructured in the 1980s and early 1990s — are vulnerable to profit slowdowns and to intense competition from cheap exports from the Far East, now trying to trade its way out of a slump with goods priced in devalued currencies. David Bowers, analyst at Merrill Lynch in London, said the market had "very, very high expectations" of corporate profits and it was

hardly surprising that shares had tumbled at the first sign of weaker earnings.

The stock-market tremor, he said, had been a salutary reminder that Far Eastern deflation was still working its way through the world system, and he expected investors to become more defensive, picking shares in solid companies supplying goods and services that are needed during good times and bad.

In the City, the consensus seemed to be that, even were there to be a market cataclysm at some later date, the events of the last 48 hours could not be said to have marked its beginning. One analyst described the share slide as "summer lightning" while another insisted a true market crash would need a catalyst, such as an aggressive change in direction of US interest rates by the country's central bank, the Federal Reserve.

A thickening of the clouds of scandal surrounding the Clinton White House could also prove a detonator for a general slump in share values.

But, for now, the absence of any immediate feeling of crisis was reflected in bullion markets, usually one of the first registers of collapsing faith in paper securities and currencies.

Gold closed a little higher, at \$288 an ounce, from \$285.5 on Tuesday night. Silver ended much where it started, at \$5.4 an ounce, having moved up to \$5.49 during the day before retreating again.

Roger Chaplin, of broker T Hoare, said the pull over both commodities and equities remained the lack of any recovery in the Far East. However, he suggested gold may be bumping along the bottom, prior to some sort of recovery, and noted that minerals companies such as Minarco and Rio Tinto were showing strong dividend growth that was undervalued by investors.



Tension tells on trade checker Gina Balice at the Chicago Board of Trade as markets fell

PHOTOGRAPH BY BETH A KESER

Goldman's guru prescribes a tonic

Mark Tran reveals how a few words from strategists and analysts can cause massive shifts in stocks and shares

CALM returned to the US stock market yesterday, as it was buoyed by upbeat comments from Abby Cohen, chief strategist for Goldman Sachs and one of Wall Street's most influential figures.

"In our view, the recent weaknesses in stock prices (at least 10 per cent for the major indices) has not been accompanied by a proportionate fundamental weakness. Specifically, the latest news on the economy and corporate performance have been better than is commonly perceived," she said, setting the stage for a mini-rally.

When the 46-year-old Ms Cohen speaks, Wall Street listens. Her comments were particularly important the day after the Dow Jones industrial average plunged almost 300 points, the third-largest fall in its history.

Her intervention came as a welcome tonic a day after another influential analyst, Ralph Acampora of Prudential Securities, contributed to the plunge with his bearish comments. On a day without meaningful economic news, the remarks of



Mr Acampora, director of technical research, were seized upon by a nervous market.

A previously self-proclaimed "raging bull", Mr Acampora said that he expected the Dow to fall 15-20 per cent "from its highs" and that "this interruption in the bull market" would last until autumn. "After being bullish for three years, I'm now in the bear camp," he said.

Mr Acampora made his

name in 1995 as being one of the first analysts to predict that the Dow would hit 10,000 — scoffed at until the market approached the magic figure. When he released his comment, the Dow was down 140 — the slide accelerated to 224 points within minutes.

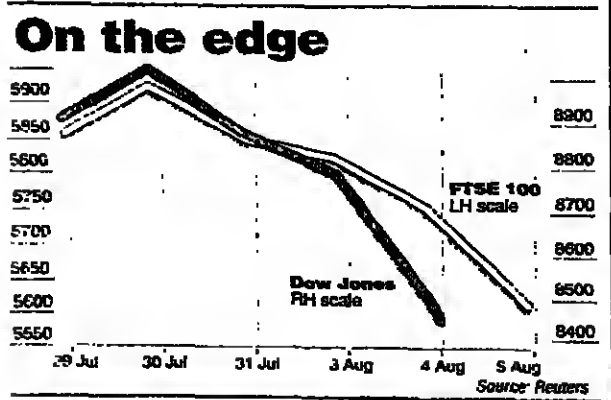
Ms Cohen's words carry weight because she has been bullish about the stock market since February 1991, shortly after the Dow hit rock bottom at 2865. It then began its extraordinary ascent in one of the great bull markets.

One by one, forecasters have turned bearish during the past two years. But Ms Cohen remains upbeat, although she believes that the Dow cannot repeat its impressive gains.

"For year-end we expect the Dow Jones Industrial Index to easily surpass 9300," she said.

Ms Cohen has argued that when the Dow approached 9300 in April, share prices would remain stuck in a choppy trading range after their big gains in the preceding five months.

When Abby Cohen speaks, Wall Street listens: 'The news on the economy is better than commonly perceived'



BT losing calls abroad

Simon Beavis
Media Business Editor

BITISH Telecom has lost its grip on one of its major markets for the first time. Ofcom figures show that BT now controls just over a third of international business call revenues, compared with nearly 60 per cent two years ago.

Some 200 companies competing with BT, and its main rival, Cable & Wireless Communications, now hold 1.6 per cent of the market.

Although BT remains the single largest player, with 37.1 per cent, its market share has been hacked back from 57.4 per cent two years ago.

CWC and cable operators are down from a peak of 27.9 per cent two years ago to 21.3 per cent in the year to April.

The industry watchdog's figures also show BT's share of all business call revenues — international and domestic — is now in steeper decline than ever before, even though it remains the dominant provider and still has a solid 60 per cent share of all calls, domestic and business.

It now controls 64 per cent of all corporate call revenues compared with 72 per cent the year before.

Ofcom's new director-general, David Edwards, said: "This shows the success of the UK's policy to liberalise the international markets."

With such fierce competition, customers can demand better services at better prices."

Ofcom says that BT has cut its call charges to the US by 58 per cent and to France and Germany by 79 per cent since privatisation in 1984.

But with the expansion of the phone market — fuelled by far greater data as well as voice traffic — BT is still earning good money from the business.

Total revenues from overseas business calls grew from £178.1 million in the second quarter of last year to £203 million in the three months to June 1998.

BT's revenues fell from £24.1 million last time to £23.1 million.

Isa 'kitemark' criticised

Rupert Jones

THE new tax-free Individual Savings Account has been dealt a serious blow after the Personal Investment Authority warned that Government plans to give them a stamp of approval could lead to a flood of people buying unsuitable products.

Raising the spectre of a new mis-selling scandal, the leading investment regulator said a proposed kitemark-style award for Isas which meet certain standards might be viewed by the public as a Government guarantee of performance. This could lure inexperienced savers into risky stock market-based invest-

ments when they would be better off with other products.

The PIA's comments in a newsletter to investors claim to represent the latest blow to the new accounts which go on sale in April 1999 and are designed to encourage those on low incomes to save.

Earlier this week the Inland Revenue warned that Isas would cost the savings industry £200 million to set up, prompting fears that consumers will have to pick up the tab.

Sainsbury's and Tesco have indicated they may not offer them.

The Treasury's plans to highlight Isas which offer good value were unveiled in

May. Its "CAT mark" award is designed to tell consumers at a glance that the product meets minimum standards.

But many sections of the investment industry claimed it would be seen as a Government guarantee — and the PIA agrees.

"The board is of the view that the development of the CAT standards amounts in effect to product endorsement," states the PIA. "This could lead to the danger that investors could be steered away from other products which might be equally or more suitable for their needs."

The PIA is one of the regulators being absorbed into the new Financial Services Authority.

A fifth more firms go bust

Lisa Buckingham

THE number of companies going bankrupt rose by a fifth in June, according to the latest research from accountants Deloitte & Touche.

Manufacturing remained the hardest hit sector and accounted for 47 of the 125 failures.

Although the level of failures remains lower than last year, the monthly increase will intensify pressure on the Bank of England's monetary policy committee not to raise interest rates today.

Ms Cohen's words carry weight because she has been bullish about the stock market since February 1991, shortly after the Dow hit rock bottom at 2865. It then began its extraordinary ascent in one of the great bull markets.

One by one, forecasters have turned bearish during the past two years. But Ms Cohen remains upbeat, although she believes that the Dow cannot repeat its impressive gains.

"For year-end we expect the Dow Jones Industrial Index to easily surpass 9300," she said.

Ms Cohen has argued that when the Dow approached 9300 in April, share prices would remain stuck in a choppy trading range after their big gains in the preceding five months.

The survey showed that London and the South-east experienced the highest number of business failures in the last month.

Figures for the past 12 months show, however, that the North-west, Yorkshire and Humberside, as well as the West Midlands, were also badly affected.

After manufacturing — which accounts for 430 of the last year's 1,230 company failures — the collapses among construction firms and in the financial and business service sectors were most severe.

Mr Dargan cautioned against drawing too many conclusions from one month's figures but said: "While an increase in corporate failure is of concern, the figures are still below those for the same period last year."

"As yet, there isn't substantive evidence of this spilling over into the services sector but the next three months will provide significant evidence of the health of the economy."

News in brief

Atomic sell-off 'cost taxpayer £160m'

THE taxpayer lost £160 million as a result of the bungled 1996 flotation of AEA Technology, once part of the Atomic Energy Authority, says the Commons public accounts committee. The MPs backed an analysis by the National Audit Office which in March censured civil servants for their handling of the sale and for inadequately supervising Cazenove, the broker which sold shares in AEA to three of its own companies.

Department of Trade and Industry officials were criticised for not phasing the sale. The PAC said that investors in AEA made a huge instant profit as the shares, sold at 280p each, rose to 323.5p on the first day of trading. By the end of May the shares stood at 777.5p each. — Nicholas Bannister

Sterling hits GKN

ENGINEERING and defence group GKN said yesterday that first-half profits, which rose 13 per cent to £226 million before tax and exceptional items, would have been up 16.9 per cent but for the strong pound. The group, whose armoured vehicles division won the lucrative order for the European multi-role "battlefield taxi" earlier this year, said talks about an alliance between its Westland helicopter subsidiary with Italy's state-owned Agusta were still in progress. — Nicholas Bannister

Prudential jobs boost

INSURANCE company Prudential is to create 500 new jobs at the head office of its recently acquired Scottish Amicable arm in Stirling. It is to spend £15 million on the office to accommodate the extra staff who will bring the workforce up to 2,300. — PA

SR Gent factories to close

UP TO 500 jobs are to go at SR Gent, the troubled Marks & Spencer supplier taken over in June last year by Indonesian textile tycoon Marimuti Sinivasan. The company announced yesterday that it would close three factories — at Doncaster, Sheffield and Barnsley — over the next 12 months. — Nicholas Bannister

Day the music died

AMSTERDAM became one of the few European capitals not to receive MTV on Wednesday after the music television channel withdrew from the market in a dispute with the cable TV authority. — AP

1m-a-year
salary club
wells to 49

Athletics

Wariso gets the third degree

Duncan Mackay

BRITAIN'S beleaguered selectors will have slept easier last night after Solomon Wariso finished third in his first 400 metres since he sent Roger Black into retirement. The Harare runner, competing in the DN Galan event in Stockholm, overcame the handicap of having to borrow a pair of spikes a size too small after losing his own pair to claim the scalp of a number of top names. The most notable was Jerome Young, the United States champion, whom he picked off down the home straight. The winner was the American world bronze medalist Tyree Washington in 44.88sec. Wariso clocked 45.23 but lost out on the opportunity of a sub-45 time when he misjudged the finishing line and eased down too early.

Wariso, 31, finished third in the AAA Championships in Birmingham last week behind Iwan Thomas and Mark Richardson — who gained automatic selection for the European Championships in Budapest — and edged out Black by 0.03sec. Black announced his retirement after the selectors overlooked him for the third discretionary spot.

Wariso withdrew from Black's farewell race on Sunday because he injured his

knee when he fell over the line at Birmingham. He is so inexperienced over one lap that Stockholm was only the third occasion he had run the event seriously outdoors.

The performance completed a good day for Wariso. Earlier he had been cleared to run in the Commonwealth Games next month. He was originally banned from the Games for life by the Commonwealth Games Council for England under their policy of suspending all drug abusers but he was allowed the appeal on the grounds that it was a "minor breach" and a "genuine mistake". He was given a three-month ban by the sport in 1994 for taking the pseudoephedrine derivative Up Your Gas.

"Solomon is genuinely sorry for what happened and believes it was a genuine mistake and is now clear on his account to run in the Commonwealth Games," said the chairman Jeff Cook.

"We are now satisfied he has served his ban and he won't be doing it again. In fact he is so insecure about banned substances that he won't drink an open can of liquid or accept anything from anybody else until he is satisfied it is clean."

There was a big disappointment for the crowd in Stockholm when Marion Jones pulled out of the 100m because of back pains.

Rugby Union

Plans for new Euro event go on despite French rejection

PLANS for an independent European tournament will continue despite a peace deal yesterday in which the majority of French clubs agreed to continue to play in the established competitions. After talks to resolve the dispute with their national federation (FFR) the French clubs decided to stay in the established European Cup which the top English clubs have rejected.

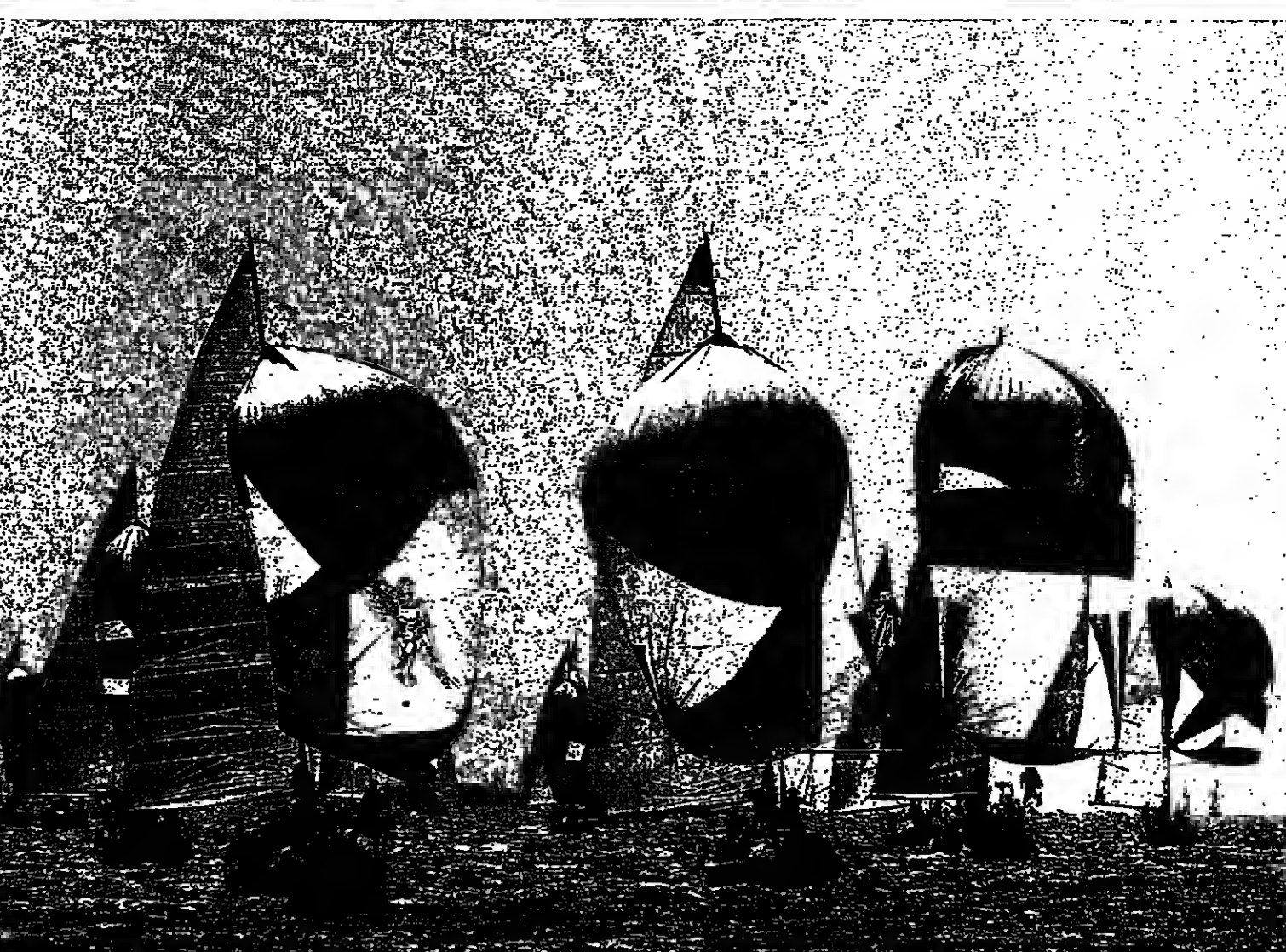
Undaunted, the English First Division Rugby club executives Doug Ash said last night: "I am going ahead on the basis of setting up a 24-club competition involving France, England and Wales. I will be putting that in front of

the RFU and asking them to explore the possibilities of attracting Scotland, Ireland and Italian participation."

Earlier the FFR president Bernard Lapasset said: "Stade Francaise, Perpignan and Cognac have confirmed they will play in the European Cup while the board of directors of Toulouse and Bègles-Bordeaux will confirm their position after meetings tonight."

The FFR still wants English clubs to play in the official European tournaments. "It may be too late for them this season," admitted Lapasset, who added: "If England are not back in Europe in 1999-2000, then there won't be another European Cup."

Cowes Week



Billow talk... competitors surge towards the finish line during yesterday's racing

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS WOOD

Lance in the vanguard of the Britannia Cup as the little men have their day

EVERY so often a good little boat will beat the bigger boats and it all came true for Paul and Marie-Claude Heya and Stewart Hawthorn yesterday, writes Rob Fisher at Cowes.

Their diminutive J-90, J-1000, 2, lifted the Britannia Cup, the top prize of Cowes Week, by 15 seconds, even after they had been

forced to take a two per cent penalty for hitting the West Ledge buoy.

J-1000 2 beat Tony de Mulder's Victor 4, a 38-foot Ed Dubois design, with the 12-metre Crusader of Richard Matthews in third place. Mike Slade's 80-foot Hombay Gin was first home, 40 minutes ahead of the eventual winner, but

wound up 28th on corrected time.

It was a day for the little boats. Or it was for the low handicappers in Class 2, where Stephen Fein's Swan 48, Full Pelt, sailed by Jo Richards, won by two minutes. Tim Herring and Robert Dean won the Sigma 400, Prime Evil, were second over a course

sailed exclusively in the western Solent.

Peter Jackson steered David Elderman's Beneteau 33.7 to a narrow win over Neville Rodkin's X-332, Djinn Seng X, Class 3, with Peter Bearflex by 15 seconds. In the X-boats, Peter Baines, added another first to his record.

ware Mistress, beat Nigel Theadom's Crique, the winner of the previous day's race, by two seconds.

Andrew McIlvaine made it two-in-a-row in the X-99 Class with his Next Jekyll. Heating Pat Blake's New Reflex by 15 seconds. In the X-boats, Peter Baines, added another first to his record.

Rugby League

Cardiff look beyond franchise decision and start talking big in Sydney

Andy Wilson

CARDIFF are ready to announce a number of big-name Antipodean signings if their bid for a 1999 Super League franchise is accepted next week, despite Tuesday's court setback for their rugby union backers.

The Cardiff Athletic Club lost their High Court case against the Welsh Rugby Union but Peter Tunks, the Cardiff Australian Test prop who is fronting their rugby league operation, insisted: "That doesn't affect us at all."

One man seemingly set for South Wales is the leading scrum-half Greg "Brandy" Alexander, Tunks's 1986 Kangaroo tour team-mate. Alexander's current club, Penrith, are set to merge with their Sydney neighbours Parramatta and could provide rich pickings for Cardiff.

Tony Mestrov, the Australian prop, yesterday became Wigan's fourth overseas player for next season. Robbie McCord

is expected to fill the remaining vacancy. That would squeeze out Mark Bell, but Henry Paul could still stay as he becomes exempt on residential grounds this winter.

Neil Cowie returns to the Wigan front row in tomorrow night's game at London after a hamstring injury.

Steve Rosellen, the longest-serving of London's Australians, has retired after a succession of injuries while John Scar, the Sheffield Eagles coach, has extended his contract to the end of 2001.

Away from the Super League, Stuart Flowers of York has been suspended for three months after testing positive for ephedrine.

Haydock Jackpot card with guide to the form

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
2.00	Don't Forget
2.30	King Tingo
3.00	Aspirant Dan
3.30	Thames (W) (W)
4.00	Taylor Chance
4.30	Champion
5.00	Rabbits

Left-handed, 1m30 course with 400 n.m. Straight 6. Galloping in character. Selling good to soft. In place in Soft. A Danes Offshore. Draw: High numbers best in sprint. Seven day winners: None. Stakes: 2-3-5-10-15-20-25-30-35-40-45-50-55-60-65-70-75-80-85-90-95-100-110-120-130-140-150-160-170-180-190-200-210-220-230-240-250-260-270-280-290-300-310-320-330-340-350-360-370-380-390-400-410-420-430-440-450-460-470-480-490-500-510-520-530-540-550-560-570-580-590-600-610-620-630-640-650-660-670-680-690-700-710-720-730-740-750-760-770-780-790-800-810-820-830-840-850-860-870-880-890-900-910-920-930-940-950-960-970-980-990-1000-1010-1020-1030-1040-1050-1060-1070-1080-1090-1100-1110-1120-1130-1140-1150-1160-1170-1180-1190-1200-1210-1220-1230-1240-1250-1260-1270-1280-1290-1300-1310-1320-1330-1340-1350-1360-1370-1380-1390-1400-1410-1420-1430-1440-1450-1460-1470-1480-1490-1500-1510-1520-1530-1540-1550-1560-1570-1580-1590-1600-1610-1620-1630-1640-1650-1660-1670-1680-1690-1700-1710-1720-1730-1740-1750-1760-1770-1780-1790-1800-1810-1820-1830-1840-1850-1860-1870-1880-1890-1900-1910-1920-1930-1940-1950-1960-1970-1980-1990-2000-2010-2020-2030-2040-2050-2060-2070-2080-2090-2100-2110-2120-2130-2140-2150-2160-2170-2180-2190-2200-2210-2220-2230-2240-2250-2260-2270-2280-2290-2300-2310-2320-2330-2340-2350-2360-2370-2380-2390-2400-2410-2420-2430-2440-2450-2460-2470-2480-2490-2500-2510-2520-2530-2540-2550-2560-2570-2580-2590-2600-2610-2620-2630-2640-2650-2660-2670-2680-2690-2700-2710-2720-2730-2740-2750-2760-2770-2780-2790-2800-2810-2820-2830-2840-2850-2860-2870-2880-2890-2900-2910-2920-2930-2940-2950-2960-2970-2980-2990-3000-3010-3020-3030-3040-3050-3060-3070-3080-3090-3100-3110-3120-3130-3140-3150-3160-3170-3180-3190-3200-3210-3220-3230-3240-3250-3260-3270-3280-3290-3300-3310-3320-3330-3340-3350-3360-3370-3380-3390-3400-3410-3420-3430-3440-3450-3460-3470-3480-3490-3500-3510-3520-3530-3540-3550-3560-3570-3580-3590-3600-3610-3620-3630-3640-3650-3660-3670-3680-3690-3700-3710-3720-3730-3740-3750-3760-3770-3780-3790-3800-3810-3820-3830-3840-3850-3860-3870-3880-3890-3900-3910-3920-3930-3940-3950-3960-3970-3980-3990-4000-4010-4020-4030-4040-4050-4060-4070-4080-4090-4100-4110-4120-4130-4140-4150-4160-4170-4180-4190-4200-4210-4220-4230-4240-4250-4260-4270-4280-4290-4300-4310-4320-4330-4340-4350-4360-4370-4380-4390-4400-4410-4420-4430-4440-4450-4460-4470-4480-4490-4500-4510-4520-4530-4540-4550-4560-4570-4580-4590-4600-4610-4620-4630-4640-4650-4660-4670-4680-4690-4700-4710-4720-4730-4740-4750-4760-4770-4780-4790-4800-4810-4820-4830-4840-4850-4860-4870-4880-4890-4900-4910-4920-4930-4940-4950-4960-4970-4980-4990-5000-5010-5020-5030-5040-5050-5060-5070-5080-5090-5100-5110-5120-5130-5140-5150-5160-5170-5180-5190-5200-5210-5220-5230-5240-5250-5260-5270-5280-5290-5300-5310-5320-5330-5340-5350-5360-5370-5380-5390-5400-5410-5420-5430-5440-5450-5460-5470-5480-5490-5500-5510-5520-5530-5540-5550-5560-5570-5580-5590-5600-5610-5620-5630-5640-5650-5660-5670-5680-5690-5700-5710-5720-5730-5740-5750-5760-5770-5780-5790-5800-5810-5820-5830-5840-5850-5860-5870-5880-5890-5900-5910-5920-5930-5940-5950-5960-5970-5980-5990-6000-6010-6020-6030-6040-6050-6060-6070-6080-6090-6100-6110-6120-6130-6140-6150-6160-6170-6180-6190-6200-6210-6220-6230-6240-6250-6260-6270-6280-6290-6300-6310-6320-6330-6340-6350-6360-6370-6380-6390-6400-6410-6420-6430-6440-6450-6460-6470-6480-6490-6500-6510-6520-6530-6540-6550-6560-6570-6580-6590-6600-6610-6620-6630-6640-6650-6660-6670-6680-6690-6700-6710-6720-6730-6740-6750-6760-6770-6780-6790-6800-6810-6820-6830-6840-6850-6860-6870-6880-6890-6900-6910-6920-6930-6940-6950-6960-6970-6980-6990-7000-7010-7020-7030-7040-7050-7060-7070-7080-7090-7100-7110-7120-7130-7140-7150-7160-7170-7180-7190-7200-7210-7220-7230-7240-7250-7260-7270-7280-7290-7300-7310-7320-7330-7340-7350-7360-7370-7380-7390-7400-7410-7420-7430-7440-7450-7460-7470-7480-7490-7500-7510-7520-7530-7540-7550-7560-7570-7580-7590-7600-7610-7620-7630-7640-7650-7660-7670-7680-7690-7700-7710-7720-7730-7740-7750-7760-7770-7780-7790-7800-7810-7820-7830-7840-7850-7860-7870-7880-7890-7900-7910-7920-7930-7940-7950-7960-7970-7980-7990-8000-8010-8020-8030-8040-8050-8060-8070-8080-8090-8100-8110-8120-8130-8140-8150-8160-8170-8180-8190-8200-8210-8220-8230-8240-8250-8260-8270-8280-8290-8300-8310-8320-8330-8340-8350-8360-8370-8380-8390-8400-8410-8420-8430-8440-8450-8460-8470-8480-8490-8500-8510-8520-8530-8540-8550-8560-8570-8580-8590-8600-8610-8620-8630-8640-8650-8660-8670-8680-8690-8700-8710-8720-8730-8740-8750-8760-8770-8780-8790-8800-8810-8820-8830-8840-8850-8860-8870-8880-8890-8900-8910-8920-8930-8940-8950-8960-8970-8980-8990-9000-9010-9020-9030-9040-9050-9060-9070-9080-9090-9100-9110-9120-9130-9140-9150-9160-9170-9180-9190-9200-9210-9220-9230-9240-9250-9260-9270-9280-9290-9300-9310-9320-9330-9340-9350-9360-9370-9380-9390-9400-9410-9420-9430-9440-9450-9460-9470-9480-9490-9500-9510-9520-9530-9540-9550-9560-9570-9580-9590-9600-9610-9620-9630-9640-9650-9660-9670-9680-9690-9700-9710-9720-9730-9740-9750-9760-9770-9780-9790-9800-9810-9820-9830-9840-9850-9860-9870-9880-9890-9900-9910-9920-9930-9940-9950-9960-9970-9980-9990-10000-10010-10020-10030-10040-10050-10060-10070-10080-10090-10100-10110-10120-10130-10140-10150-10160-10170-10180-10190-10200-10210-10220-10230-10240-10250-10260-10270-10280-10290-10300-10310-10320-10330-10340-10350-10360-10370-10380-10390-10400-10410-10420-10430-10440-10450-10460-10470-10480-10490-10500-10510-10520-10530-10540-10550-10560-10570-10580-10590-10600-10610-10620-10630-10640-10650-10660-10670-10680-10690-10700-10710-10720-10730-10740-10750-10760-10770-10780-10790-10800-10810-10820-10830-10840-10850-10860-10870-10880-10890-10900-10910-10920-10930-10940-10950-10960-10970-10980-10990-11000-11010-11020-11030-11040-11050-11060-11070-11080-11090-11100-11110-11120-11130-11140-11150-11160-11170-11180-11190-11200-11210-11220-11230-11240-11250-11260-11270-11280-11290-11300-11310-11320-11330-11340-11350-11360-11370-11380-11390-11400-11410-11420-11430-11440-11450-11460-11470-11480-11490-11500-11510-11520-11530-11540-11550-11560-11570-11580-11590-11600-11610-11620-11630-11640-11650-11660-11670-11680-11690-11700-11710-11720-11730-11740-11750-11760-11770-11780-11790-11800-11810-11820-11830-11840-11850-11860-11870-11880-11890-11900-11910-11920-11930-11940-11950-11960-11970-11980-11990-12000-12010-12020-12030-12040-12050-12060-12070-12080-12090-12100-12110-12120-12130-12140-12150-12160-12170-12180-12190-12200-12210-12220-12230-12240-12250-12260-12270-12280-12290-12300-12310-12320-12330-12340-12350-12360-12370-12380-12390-12400-12410-12420-12430-12440-12450-12460-12470-12480-12490-12500-12510-12520-12530-12540-12550-12560-12570-12580-12590-12600-12610-12620-12630-12640-12650-12660-12670-12680-12690-12700-12710-12720-12730-12740-12750-12760-12770-12780-12790-12800-12810-12820-12830-12840-12850-12860-12870-12880-12890-12900-12910-12920-12930-12940-12950-12960-12970-12980-12990-13000-13010-13020-13030-13040-13050-13060-13070-13080-13090-13100-13110-13120-13130-13140-13150-13160-13170-13180-13190-13200-13210-13220-13230-13240-13250-13260-13270-13280-13290-13300-13310-13320-13330-13340-13350-13360-13370-13380-13390-13400-13410-13420-13430-13440-13450-13460-13470-13480-13490-13500-13510-13520-13530-13540-13550-13560-13570-13580-13590-13600-13610-13620-13630-13640-13650-13660-13670-13680-13690-13700-13710-13720-13730-13740-13750-13760-13770-13780-13790-13800-13810-13820-13830-13840-13850-13860-13870-13880-13890-13900-13910-13920-13930-13940-13950-13960-13970-13980-13990-14000-14010-14020-14030-14040-14050-14060-14070-14080-14090-14100-14110-14120-14130-14140-14150-14160-14170-14180-14190-14200-14210-14220-14230-14240-14250-14260-14270-14280-14290-14300-14310-14320-14330-14340-14350-14360-14370-14380-14390-14400-14410-14420-14430-14440-14450-14460-14470-14480-14490-14500-14510-14520-14530-14540-14550-14560-14570-14580-14590-14600-14610-14620-14630-14640-14650-14660-14670-14680-14690-14700-14710-14720-14730-14740-14750-14760-14770-14780-14790-14800-14810-14820-14830-14840-14850-14860-14870-14880-14890-14900-14910-14920-14930-14940-14950-14960-14970-14980-14990-15000-15010-15020-15030-15040-15050-15060-15070-15080-15090-15100-15110-15120-15130-15140-15150-15160-15170-15180-15190-15200-15210-15220-15230-15240-15250-15260-15270-15280-15290-15300-15310-15320-15330-15340-15350-15360-15370-15380-15390-15400-15410-15420-15430-15440-15450-15460-15470-15480-15490-15500-15510-15520-15530-15540-15550-15560-15570-15580-15590-15600-15610-15620-15630-15640-15650-15660-15670-15680-15690-15700-15710-15720-15730-15740-15750-15760-15770-15780-15790-15800-15810-15820-15830-15840-15850-15860-15870-15880-15890-15900-15910-15920-15930-15940-15950-15960-15970-15980-15990-16000-16010-16020-16030-16040-16050-16060-16070-16080-16090-16100-16110-16120-16130-16140-16150-16160-16170-16180-16190-16200-16210-16220-16230-16240-16250-16260-16270-16280-16290-16300-16310-16320-16330-16340-16350-16360-16370-16380-16390-16400-16410-16420-16430-16440-16450-16460-16470-16480-16490-16500-16510-16520-16530-16540-16550-16560-16570-16580-16590-16600-16610-16620-16630-16640-16650-16660-16670-16680-16690-16700-16710-16720

Football

Martin Thorpe hears Alex Ferguson pour cold water on a hot potato on the day that saw Manchester United, Arsenal and Ajax finally come clean

Super League is '10 years away'

MANCHESTER United and Arsenal yesterday confirmed one of football's worst-kept secrets when they made their first public admission to being involved in talks to form a breakaway European Super League. The Dutch champions Ajax also admitted being party to the discussions.

However, the United manager Alex Ferguson dismissed the concept as possibly being "10 years away", which supports a growing view that the

exploratory interest shown in the £2 billion project by Europe's elite clubs is little more than a strategy to put pressure on Uefa to concede favourable changes to the make-up of the current Champions League.

It is understood that the power-brokers behind the Super League are struggling to gain even a tentative commitment from the clubs they have approached.

Yesterday Ferguson described the Super League as "a shot across the bows of the

people who run European football. It is maybe being suggested by people who feel they are not getting enough of the TV money".

And the statements issued by United and Arsenal, almost identical in content, hinted at a similar motive as the clubs stressed their commitment to the current set-up.

"Manchester United [or Arsenal] confirms that it is involved in discussions concerning the formation of proposed new European competitions.

"We would, however, stress that we are totally committed to the FA Premier League and other domestic competitions and are very mindful of our responsibilities to the governing bodies.

"There is no question of Manchester United [or Arsenal] committing to a new competition until all appropriate consultations have taken place.

"Football is a developing industry and we have a duty to examine any serious proposal that we feel might be beneficial to Manchester

United [Arsenal, its fans, shareholders and football generally].

Obviously United and Arsenal are intent on keeping future options open. They are reportedly holding discussions with the European Commission on September 7 to see what powers Uefa and Uefa hold to impose sanctions if they were to break away.

But Ferguson believes the actual league is a long way off. "Talk of the Super League is all hypothetical," he said. "It's all talk, it could be 10

years away. People have been talking about such things for 50 years or so but that doesn't mean they will happen.

"You have the Champions League at the moment that is extensive and it's only going to get bigger next year. I don't think you will see a Super League at the moment. I feel it's a long way away."

However, even the shadow of a breakaway league could force Uefa to concede the changes in prize distribution and competition format which the big clubs want in their

ever-growing thirst for cash. And according to Franz Beckenbauer, Uefa does have a scheme for a European League. "Uefa has a plan for a super league in its drawer. Open it up," said the Bayern Munich president.

His view was shared by another German source, the Borussia Dortmund manager Michael Meier. "According to our information, Uefa has a clear plan for a European League," he said. Uefa was unwilling to comment yesterday.

Arsenal hope to launch Vivas on Sunday

Russell Thomas

ARSENE WENGER hopes the Argentina World Cup defender Nelson Vivas will make his Arsenal debut at Wembley on Sunday in the Charity Shield against Manchester United.

After agreeing terms and passing a medical, the 28-year-old full-back needs only international clearance from the Swiss FA to wrap up his £2 million move to the English Double winners.

"We are very close to completing the deal for Vivas. It should go through at any stage and of course we would like him to play in the Charity Shield," said Wenger.

Although Vivas's club is Boca Juniors, clearance is required from the Swiss FA because he is currently on loan to Lugano. The combative Argentinian, who played against England in France 98, was marked down as the most penalised defender in the finals, conceding 18 free-kicks and receiving a caution.

Vivas provides cover for the veterans Lee Dixon and Nigel Winterburn. Dixon follows another full-back to Highbury, the French teenager David Grondin, signed for £500,000 from St Etienne, being Wenger's only other recruit this summer.

Arsenal's manager, however, ruled out a move for the Holland midfielder Clarence Seedorf, despite Real Madrid's claim that Arsenal were set to offer £12 million. "He is a quality player," said Wenger, "but we are not looking to strengthen that area at the moment."

Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Vieira, Arsenal's French World Cup winners, may play only a half each on Sunday. Wenger said: "They are a little bit far away. Maybe they have had too many receptions and need longer to prepare."

The two midfielders linked up again with the squad only on Sunday, as did Holland's World Cup pair of Dennis Bergkamp and Marc Overmars. But they are almost certain to start against United. "The Dutch players are okay," said Wenger.

Newcastle United plc is reported to be interested in launching a digital TV service. Newcastle will link with Granada Group and BSkyB to provide a service similar to Manchester United TV.

Celtic, who are applying for a full stock market listing, yesterday announced a record net profit of £7.1 million for the last financial year.

Eagle swoops and becomes Bee keeper

Joe Bernstein meets Ron Noades, the new manager-chairman-owner of Brentford

BRENTFORD players can expect their dressing-room team to talk to be short and not always sweet this season. Ron Noades, manager, chairman and owner, is a man of few, albeit usually forthright, words.

"You don't have long conversations with Ron," explains Ray Lewington, one of the few managers whose working relationship with Noades has outlasted their rows. "He will ask 'What do you think?', then tell you if he agrees or disagrees, and walk off."

For someone who has just achieved the ultimate football fantasy — collect £20 million, buy a football club, pick the team — Noades comes across as remarkably unsentimental. Complete control of the Brentford boardroom and dressing-room is career progression to him, not a dream come true.

Independently wealthy through the property business, he firmly believes 24 years as club chairman at Southall, Wimbledon and, until this summer, Crystal Palace, gives him the qualifications and expertise to run team affairs as well.

He has a ready-made response for those who question his capacity to juggle the separate jobs: "Clubs are destabilised when the manager fears the sack. Well, that won't happen at Brent-

ford, will it? I don't give a toss what people think. All I ask is for Brentford fans to turn up and see if they think the club is being run on the right lines."

Noades has three experienced coaches — Brian Sparrow, the former Reading manager Terry Bullivant and Lewington — to take training on a daily basis. But it will be Noades himself dispensing words of wisdom in the dressing-room at quarter-to-three: "I wouldn't be the manager otherwise, would I?"

Noades maintains promotion is not essential this season — the main task is to begin an overhaul of the club's first team and youth development programme. He has gained a reputation as the most robust of personalities. Stories of his interference with managers at Palace were rife and he received criticism for comments about black players during a TV documentary.

Ultimately the club was probably too big for him to go the whole hog and appoint himself manager. That opportunity presented itself this summer when Noades was freed by Mark Goldberg's £22 million takeover of Palace, an offer the seller describes as being "too good to refuse."

Noades switched his attentions to West London and bought Brentford off the majority shareholder David



The Bees' knees... Ron Noades has cashed in his lucrative stake at Crystal Palace to assume total control at Brentford

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX YELING

Webb for £1.75 million. The players, down in the dumps by relegation when Noades arrived, have been flattered by this multi-millionaire's attention. Not many Third Division sides spent their pre-season at luxury villas in La Manga, Spain.

Lewington, once deposed as Palace manager after Noades insisted he changed the playing system for home

games to a flat back four, has been brought into Griffin Park and is confident of Noades's ability. "I think Ron can pull this off," he said. "He's got money, he knows the industry and he has brought in good people. It's hard for anyone to pull rank on Ron about football. If you have watched an up-and-coming player four times, the chances are Ron

will have seen him five times." Noades has made seven moderate summer signings, the most eye-catching of which are the promising young Crystal Palace pair Robert Grinnall and Danny Buxall. They were signed for a combined fee of £40,000, yet Noades would allow only the 27-year-old centre-forward Robert Taylor to leave

for £500,000 to Gillingham on Monday. He has pledged handsome bonuses for the Brentford players if they are challenging for promotion. But they will not receive an extra penny if the team are in the bottom half of the table.

Noades's arrival at Griffin Park is an experiment in ultimate control of one club by

one man. Whatever the result, it is doubtful if the man himself will allow the mask to slip and outwardly display any pleasure. "Ron could never be a politician — he doesn't smile at people," says Lewington. "But his bark is worse than his bite really." Tell that to the Brentford players anxiously awaiting their first half-time roasting.

Wrexham go in for a Rush job

IAN RUSH, the former Wales and Liverpool striker, yesterday agreed to become the player-coach of Wrexham on a one-year contract and was pencilled in to make his debut during Saturday's visit of Reading.

Rush, 37, in October and who says he turned down offers from Japan and Europe, added that while he planned to concentrate on playing he saw his appointment at the Second Division club as a first step on the coaching ladder. "I like the setup at Wrexham and feel I can learn the coaching trade," he said. The Wales record scorer, with 28 goals in 73 internationals, was released by Newcastle last month.

Aston Villa yesterday warned Everton that they would recall the defender David Unsworth if his £3 million move to Goodison Park was not finalised soon. "We are becoming frustrated at the time it is taking to complete the paperwork," said Villa's secretary Steve Strule.

The manager is threatening to call Unsworth back for training. Naturally we are inquiring about the delays but

Everton insist that they are purely technical." Chelsea's player-manager Gianluca Vialli plans to appeal against Dennis Wise's sending off in Tuesday's friendly with Atletico Madrid as his captain looks likely to incur a three-match suspension.

Yesterday the referee Ruud Bossen said that he would be reporting the incident to the Dutch FA. Wise was sent off in the 4-0 defeat after a flare-up with Carlos Aguilera, who was also dismissed.

Stuart Pearce, the Newcastle defender and former England captain, was taken to a Nottingham hospital with back injuries after his car collided with a truck yesterday afternoon. His condition was later described as "comfortable".

Newcastle's Stéphane Saphorin lasted only 11 minutes of his debut last night, after falling awkwardly and injuring his left ankle in a friendly at Bray. After two minutes of treatment the 23-year-old signing was taken to the dressing-room.

Wolves have signed the former Spain midfielder Fernando Gomez, 32, on a free transfer from Valencia.

Results

Football

GERMAN LEAGUE CUP: Schalke 04 vs VfB Stuttgart 3-0 (Schalke 2-0, Stuttgart 1-1).

INTERCITY CUP: Southampton vs Tottenham 1-0 (Southampton 1-0, Tottenham 0-0).

ATP GENEVA: Andre Agassi (USA) 6-4, 6-2 vs Andre Kuznetsov (RUS) 6-4, 6-2.

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WOMEN'S FIRST ROUND: Lincoln (ENG) 2-1 vs Loughborough (ENG) 1-0.

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Sport in brief

Drugs in Sport

French police yesterday announced that a quantity of bottles and bloody syringes found in a bag near a Voronezh hotel where the Gan, Casino, Saeo and Kelme teams had stayed on July 25 and 26, when the Tour de France passed through the area, were now being analysed.

The International Cycling Union, meanwhile, will meet teams and riders in Lausanne on Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss the off-road goings on at the Tour.

The 1994 French Open finalist Alberto Berasategui, the World No. 15, has confirmed his entry for the Samsung Open in Bournemouth. The Spaniard joins his countryman Albert Costa and Felix Mantilla in the draw for the clay-court tournament which runs from September 14-20.

England beat Canada 2-1 in the second women's Test at Milton Keynes yesterday to clinch the three-Test series, writes Pat Rooley.

Amy McParlane gave Canada a fourth-minute lead but Jane Smith equalised from a corner in the 23rd minute and Lucilla Wright got the winner early in the second half.

South Africa's Gary Player will be attempting to win his 10th major championship at the Senior British Open at Royal Portrush today.

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England vs South Africa

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SportsGuardian

England v South Africa fifth Cornhill Test

Donald let off with fine and free to play

David Hopps on the bowler's punishment for his criticism of the umpire Kitchen

ALLAN DONALD, the South Africa test bowler, is free to resume his place in the final Cornhill Test at Trent Bridge today after being spared an immediate ban for his public criticism of Mervyn Kitchen's umpiring performance at Trent Bridge.

Donald received a one-match ban, suspended for 12 months, and was fined £550 as the ICC match referee Judge Ahmed Ebrahim expressed sympathy for the plight of Test umpires in the age of the video replay.

South Africa's players had privately joked that they would abandon the tour if Donald was banned, but that option was considered far more seriously than they would have dared to believe. "I did give consideration to imposing an effective period of suspension," confirmed Ebrahim, who is a Zimbabwean Supreme Court judge.

To have banned Donald would have been an over-reaction. In the live radio interview at Trent Bridge, which took place nearly a week after the end of the Trent Bridge Test, his intention had been to reflect sympathetically on Kitchen's avowed intention to retire.

Donald, who had suffered his own umpiring frustrations at Trent Bridge, when the New Zealander Steve Dunne failed to give Michael Atherton out, responded: "I think Merv Kitchen realises he made a few shockers which swung the result. If you lose concentration out there you are playing with players' careers. One decision can swing a game and, if you are not up to it, then get out of the game rather than cause yourself more damage." He then

added: "The pressure can be beyond belief and it looked to me like he was struggling." Kitchen had been shaken enough by his faulty display at Trent Bridge, when he mistakenly gave out the South Africa batsmen Jacques Kallis and Jonty Rhodes, to suggest initially: "I don't think I feel up to the job any more."

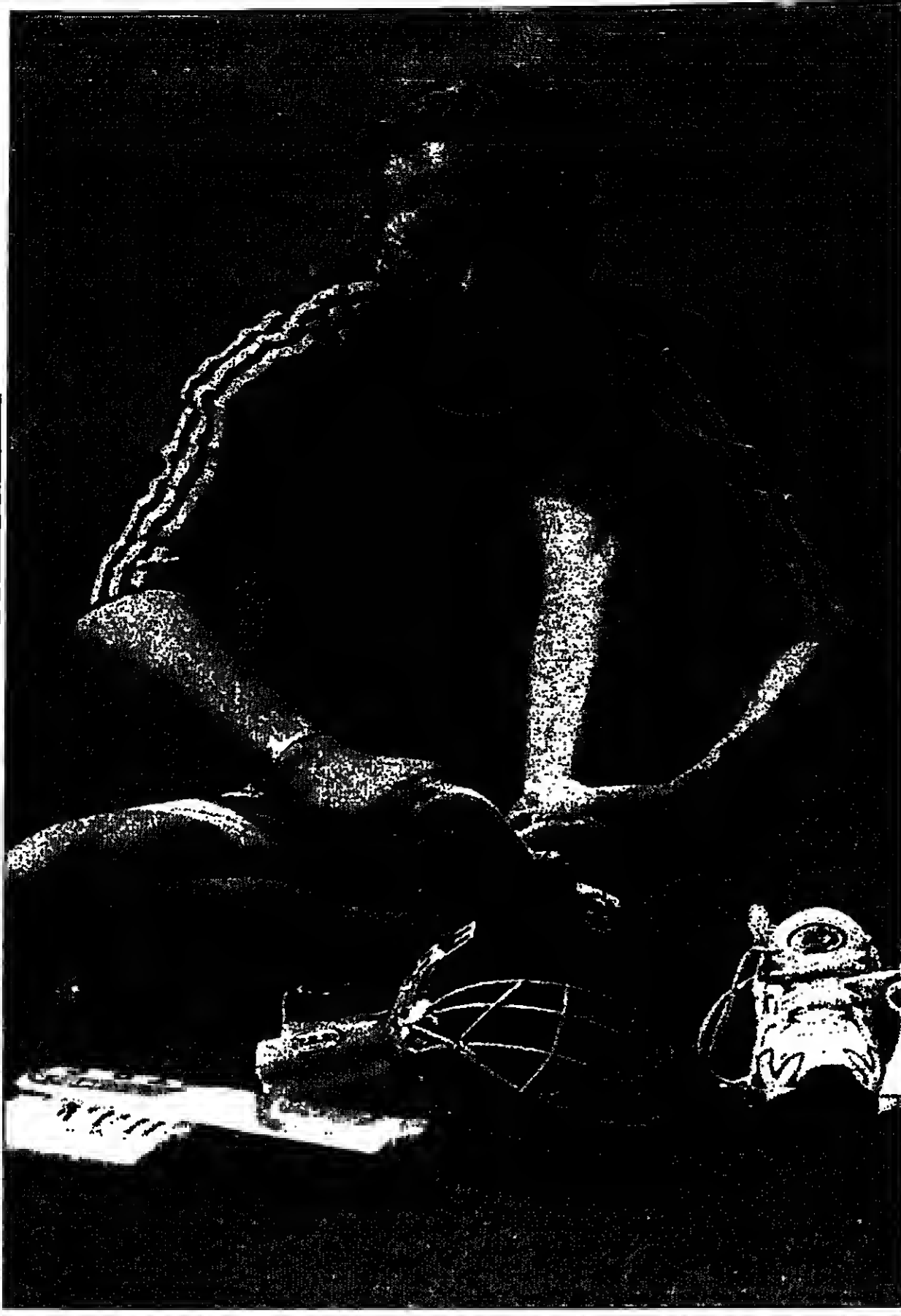
As he considers whether to withdraw from the international panel, he will have been encouraged by the extent of Judge Ebrahim's support. "It is beyond doubt that Mr Kitchen is a man of impeccable honesty," he said. "He carried out his duties during the Trent Bridge Test match with absolute honesty and in good faith."

"It is alleged that he erred in making a couple of decisions. The first and most significant person to hold up his hand and own up was Mr Kitchen himself. There was no attempt by him to find excuses or to make any effort to justify why he had ruled in a certain way."

"Umpires have a thankless task when they are called upon to make instant decisions within seconds. They don't have the benefit of TV replays and are required to make these in the heat of the moment. They are not armchair viewers like most of us but are ordinary respectable people doing an honest day's work as best they can."

It should not go unnoticed, however, that umpires' rewards have risen markedly in recent years. An English Test umpire receives a minimum of £2,500 per Test, with additional increments depending on their experience. These are substantial enough to mean that a senior Test umpire such as David Shepherd would earn slightly more than a junior Test player; Andrew Flintoff received £3,150 for his Test debut.

Donald survived because, Judge Ebrahim concluded, "he is a first offender and by reputation he is a fine man. He deserves a second chance."



Down but in... Allan Donald, fined £550, looks forward at Headingley to playing in today's deciding Test TOM JENKINS

England look for mental beef as the chips are down again

Mike Selvey assesses the requirements at Headingley to halt a distressing trend

IF England are to beat South Africa in the final Test they must ignore history and reverse the trends that have seen them fail to win a major series since retaining the Ashes in Australia more than a decade ago. If the game is played with the heart and the inches between the ears, then now is the time to demonstrate it. The team psychologist will have been earning his corn this week.

Depending on the degree of optimism, England are either on a certain loser or due a win. This is their 18th series of five or more Tests since Mike Gatting's team won in Australia and not one has brought success.

But it is worse than that for the Australians at that time were a moderate side and it is arguably 30 years, when Colin Cowdrey's side beat Gary Sobers' West Indies, since England last won a series against a team that were regarded as the best around. South Africa are not that but they are better than the 1986-87 Australians: to beat them would be a trumpet worth blowing.

Not that England have been without their opportunities. Four times in the past eight years they have gone into the final match needing a win to secure a series victory, and as many times they have failed. On three of the occasions defeat has been dramatic and humbling, casting serious doubt on the capacity of English cricketers to raise their game when the chips truly were down.

In fact, one has to go back 27 years for the last time victory in the final Test se-

cluded a series win in a full Test series, 49 to find the last such feat on home soil. Headingley always promises a good time but these days it is approached with trepidation by Englishmen as if it were a booby-trapped funfair. New Zealand began a trend in 1983 by winning there and the run has now extended to nine defeats, two draws and only three wins, two of them Gooch-inspired.

Although the pitch was relaxed some years ago to try to rid the place of its reputation for unpredictability, cricket here still requires discipline. The overhead conditions are the major factor: if it is sunny, the pitch can be sweet-natured, but let the clouds roll over and it can become a harri-dan. The word yesterday was that Leeds might come on the borderline between the baking weather predicted for the south and the cloudier north.

The selectors need to get the forecast right, for largely on this will be based their decision whether to play all four



Hick... spin alternative

specialist seamers and rely on Graeme Hick and Mark Ramprakash for any spin, or jettison a paceman, probably Alan Mullally, to make room for Ian Salisbury.

Even if the prognosis is for fine weather throughout, however, an all-weather attack could still prevail. With the pitch looking relatively grassless and cracked, the chances are that it will keep low towards the end of the match and pace bowlers best exploit that. Only if it is agreed that the pitch is likely to break up, and that mentally Salisbury can then cope with the absolute expectation that would be placed on him, would the leg-spinner play.

South Africa for their part have decided to dispense with Paul Adams and will select two of Makhaya Ntini, Steve Elworthy and the off-spinner Pat Symcox to accompany Allan Donald and Shaun Pollock. Pollock has been disappointing, failing to adjust his length from the requirements of hard wickets abroad. If he gets that right here, he could be a major factor.

The umpiring, the focus for much discontent at Trent Bridge, will be in the hands of Peter Willey, who is certainly not a fellow with whom to tangle, and Javed Akhtar, now the senior Pakistani official, who will be umpiring his first international in this country. He stood in a mid-diecast second XI match last week to get his eye in. Just like the real thing.

ENGLAND (from): M.A. Atherton, M.A. Butler, N. Hudson, T.A.J. Smart, G.A. Hick, M.A. Ramprakash, A. Flintoff, G.G. Cook, I.O.R. Salisbury, D. Gough, A.R.C. Fraser, A.D. Murray, SOUTH AFRICA (from): G. Kirsten, O.F.J. Lisenberg, J.H. Kallis, G.J. Collins, M.J. Cowie, J.N. Pretorius, S.M. Pollock, M.V. Soudry, S. Elworthy, M. Ntini, A.M. Donald, P.R. Adams, P.L. Symcox, B.M. Makhaya.

All pumped up for a kick-about



Laura Thompson

IT WAS wishful thinking, of course, dreaming of an announcement from the Football Association that: as logic decrees that Arsenal, the Premiership winners, cannot play Arsenal, the FA Cup winners, in the Charity Shield, the game will regrettably have to be cancelled.

But no, Manchester United have stepped into the breach and this week on Sky Television a cabal of pundits has previewed the fixture with more than usual fatuity. One of them said that whoever won the Charity Shield would have "scored the first highly psychological blow" in the "battle for the Premier League". In other words, according to this fool, the season will be as good as over before it has started.

That is one of the most irritating things about football, the way it always looks towards a future full of show-downs. Why can it never let anything just be?

The Charity Shield is a friendly. (Are you listening, Arsenal fans as you tear-sheets on to your David Beckham effigies?) It is, almost by definition, contested between two good teams, so the point of it is surely to let them relax and let them loose.

The Charity Shield should, in fact, be a high-class kick-about. It is being played in high summer, after all, during what even football obsessives must surely recognise as a fairly important Test match. Indeed, football has erupted like a typically ill-mannered gatecrasher into cricket's big party.

Is it not, therefore, appropriate for the Charity Shield to be what it is supposed to be, a herald of the football season rather than a vital part of it? Could not football have the grace, for once, to be mellow and laid back, to trumpet its arrival like Miles Davis?

Of course it could not. Such an idea, in that High Noon world, is heretical. Some of us may think a team could lose the Charity Shield and yet recover from that highly psychological blow. But minds more highly attuned than ours know that, in football, nothing is irrelevant. The man who scores the first goal on Sunday

will have set his stall out for the season. The man who manages the winning side will have played the first ace in a hand that contains five. And so on.

A sport which treats all events as unbelievably significant will, in the end, make them all insignificant. Football cannot go on like this. It will bust a gut.

Eventually people will realise it has played a con trick on them, pretending to be in a different league from all those other sports, with their long-gestures and their parochialism. People will see that, stripped of its cosmopolitan veneer, football in this country can, in fact, be quite deadly: that 90 minutes is nearly always about 20 too many; that most finals are gravely disappointing; that forays into Europe are frequently embarrassing; that Alan Shearer is not the best striker in the world.

ONE keeps waiting for this realisation to dawn but still it shows no sign of doing so. The balloon just keeps on inflating itself. Every time it looks as if it might be about to collapse, something happens to pump it back up again: the 4-1 defeat of Holland in the European Championship two years ago, the Michael Owen goal against Argentina in the World Cup this summer.

Yet it did, at one point, seem as though the World Cup might lay upon English football the cool hand of reality. One had only to look at Glenn Hoddle's face during the Romania game, lost 2-1, to see that.

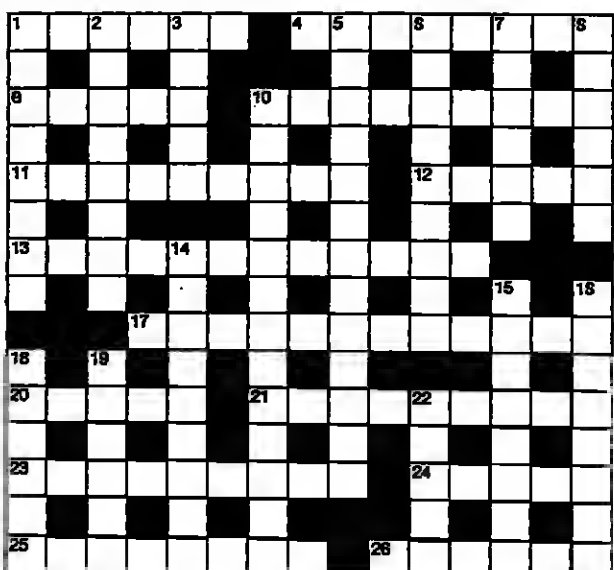
How grateful he must subsequently have been to Beckham, the player who, admittedly without meaning to, fell on his sword for his manager. Hoddle could have gone down in sporting history as the man who held the pin that picked the football balloon. Instead he found a fall guy and off the bloody great thing floated again.

It was a lucky escape, none the less. Football's latest con trick is to have allowed the belief to grow that, had it not been for Beckham, England could have won the World Cup — an idea with neither substance nor meaning, typical of a sport whose collective aim is to keep that balloon floating ever higher.

This is why football can never let anything just be. It dare not for fear that, if it stops talking itself up, it will start falling down to earth. But there is only so much hot air one can pump into something, all the same.

Guardian Crossword No 21,346

Set by Fawley.

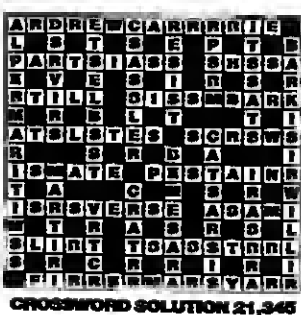


Across

- 1 Established routine to find ring in trees (6)
- 4 Unable to absorb the authentic atmosphere (6)
- 9 Changing proportions in alloy? It's true (5)
- 10 Gives up bitter, given initial impetus (4-5)
- 11 Can groom upset new, but very old relative? (3-6)
- 12 Source of amusement — private supply of mushrooms, perhaps (5)
- 13 Annoyed about one woman, I dispute losing last capital (3,2,7)
- 17 Failing to get any kind of degree? (8,4)
- 20 Bow under stress, when one's fired (5)
- 21 Lynn singing in waterway's launching area (9)

Down

- 2 Great second-hand vehicle dealer got — with this? (4,4)
- 3 Where the boatmen sing, and some drag lovers back... (5)
- 5 ... as a result of something irrelevant (2,1)
- 6 Time to request civil engineer for special unit (4,5)
- 7 Relation is not listened to (6)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 21,346

- 8 Tasty item exposed on a third page (5)
- 10 Where a real boulder could get his just deserts (8,5)
- 14 Spin bowler with two ducks and maiden giving enough scope? (5-4)
- 16 Such brainy impulses may be possible, in weirdly unreal circumstances (6)
- 18 Pursue investigation of how to define God? (6,2)
- 19 Wildly impulsive, international raised barrier first (6)
- 20 See friend edge in — such urges are instinctive (6)
- 22 In 1 down, possibly, start to take the long view (5)

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